NICOLAE DENSUŞIANU

PREHISTORIC DACIA



Translated by Alexandra Ioana Furdui

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TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

Since first reading Prehistoric Dacia, many years ago in Romania, I became almost obsessed with his theory. Years later, upon reading much of what was being published, this time in English and in Australia, on the topic of European and world civilizations, I often found myself frustrated by those authors' total ignorance of this great work, only because it had never been translated in English. So I took upon myself this task, first for my own enjoyment, then with more purpose. Being such a monumental work, I've touched only the tip of the iceberg so far, but being given the opportunity to popularize it through the medium of the Internet, I will endeavor to finish the job I've begun, even if it will take some time.

A word about how I propose to do it:

I will be translating from the text first published in 1913. The translation will follow very closely the original. I will not comment at all on his theories. Generally, I will keep the original spelling of Romanian names (as used around 1900), because I find it more relevant to Densusianu's argumentation. Unfortunately, I don't have the means to type the extra letters of the Romanian alphabet, but I don't think it will make any difference to foreign readers. I will use bold type for the text emphasized in the original text. The words originally written in Greek alphabet will be presented in bold, italic, Latin alphabet. I will exclude a number of the original illustrations (photos and drawings) where I will consider suitable. I will add, when necessary, (TN), translator's note.
Footnotes take a prominent place in Densusianu's work. The author's documentation and argumentation is extensive, occupying maybe a quarter of the entire material, or even more.
So, this is what I will do about it: I will place the original footnotes straight where they belong in the text, but in a way which will differentiate them from the rest of the text. I will ignore some footnotes which cite at length in Latin, Greek or German, or footnotes relevant only to Romanian readers. For the same reason, many chapters will only be presented in summary form, like those about Pelasgian language, comparative studies of Romanian dialects, or whole renditions of Romanian folk poems.

Densusianu's writing style is unsophisticated and straight to the point, as he tries to express and demonstrate as clearly as possible, what he has to say.
It must be said that I am an amateur, albeit a passionate one (I am an architect by profession).
I therefore hope that the readers will forgive eventual awkward translation or turns of the phrase, keeping in mind that substance is what counts here.

Alexandra Ioana Furdui
May 2005

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NICOLAE DENSUSIANU, his life and work.

PREFACE TO PREHISTORIC DACIA by Dr. C. I. Istrati (TN - a summary)

(TN - When Nicolae Densusianu died in 1911, only 1120 pages from ***Prehistoric Dacia*** had been printed. The whole book had 1152 pages, without the introduction and final conclusion, which were only in unfinished note form and could not be used afterwards.
Dr.C.I.Istrati was asked by the executor of his testament to publish the rest of the pages, and to write a preface for the whole work. The preface is 114 pages long, so I will present it here in a much shortened form. The reader must not forget that the voice is Dr.Istrati's and the time of writing was 1912).

Nicolae Densusianu (1846 – 1911) was born at Densus, a little Romanian village in Transylvania, (at that time part of the Austro – Hungarian empire), not far from Sarmisegetuza, later Ulpia Traiana, the former capital of Dacia (TN – today Romania).
His was an old Romanian family, *Pop de Hateg*, and his father Bizantius, was the priest of the village. He grew up therefore in a Romanian cultural environment, although stifled by persecution, lack of freedom of speech and suppression of their mother language, Romanian.
He took his law degree at the University of Sibiu in 1872, after which he practiced law at Fagaras, then Brasov. In 1877, at the beginning of the Russo -Turkish war (in which Romania played such a significant role in obtaining the victory and her freedom from the Turkish yoke), he resigned, migrated to Romania and received Romanian citizenship. At Bucharest he worked first at the Court of Appeal, and became a member of the nationalistic movement. He published in French "*L'element Latin en orient**. Les Roumains du Sud:*** *Macedoine, Thessalie, Epire, Thrace, Albanie, avec une carte ethnographique" (TN – The Latin element in the east.* ***The southern Romanians****: Macedonia, Thessaly, Epirus, Thrace, Albania, with an ethnographic map).*
In 1878 he received a commission from the Romanian Academy to research and collect historical documents in the libraries and archives of Hungary (Budapest) and Transylvania (Cluj, Alba-Iulia and Brasov). It took him 15 months to complete this task, during which he discovered hundreds of original documents, manuscripts, chronicles, treaties, manifests, old drawings, paintings and facsimiles. For his extraordinary contribution, he was elected in 1880 member correspondent of the Academy, in the historical section, and was offered the position of librarian – archivist. Nevertheless, he was very poorly paid and lived almost in poverty, until 1984 when he received the position of translator for the Army General Staff.
In 1884 he published *"**The revolution of Horia in Transylvania and Hungary**, 1784-1785, written on the basis of 783 official documents"*, banned in Hungary, work which was the last word in documenting the terrible tragedy of that section of our national population, the uprising which had preceded the French revolution.
In 1885 he published "***Monuments for the history of the country of Fagaras***" treating in detail the real ancient history of the Romanians of Transylvania, compared to their present situation, under Austro-Hungarian rule. He deplored the fact "that once falsehood is introduced in history, it is very difficult to uproot it and even to discover it".

During this same year he started work on his great masterpiece ***Prehistoric Dacia***, and, in order to gather material for it, he departed in 1887 on a scientific trip towards Italy. He passed through Croatia, where he studied in the library of the Academy of *Agram* all the collections of original manuscripts regarding the *Vlachii*, or Romanians from southern Croatia, then traveled through the villages of these Romanians, settled near the river Culpa, but already losing their nationality. From there he entered *Istria*, where he visited the local Romanian villages, from where he collected important material about language and traditions. He then traveled to *Dalmatia*, staying at Ragusa for some time, where he studied and copied documents from the old archives of the Ragusan republic. From Ragusa he traveled to Rome, where he spent seven months, studying in the library and archives of the Vatican, after which he traveled through the Neapolitan countryside, Apulia, Calabria and Sicily, in order to become conversant with the customs and the way of life of the *peasant* population of Italy.
He returned to his country, Romania, with a significant historical and ethnographic material.

Between 1887 and 1897 6 volumes of "***Documents regarding the History of Romanians****, 1199-1345, collected and accompanied by notes",* and in 1893 he wrote the study "*The religious independence of the Romanian Metropolitan Church of Alba-Iulia*".
In 1894 he voluntarily withdrew from public work, refused a new, very good position, being content with minimal means of subsistence, in order to have the peace and quiet needed to finish his monumental work ***Prehistoric Dacia***. In 1895 though, he took a commission from the War Ministry and wrote "***The glorious princes and famous captains of the Romanian countries***".
After 1897 he decided to dedicate all his time to ***Prehistoric Dacia***.
In his own words "**I always had in my sight the history of the entire Romanian element, in whatever countries it found itself in ancient times, either constituted in bigger states, or organized in districts only, provinces and national counties, or, finally, scattered in smaller and more remote ethnic islands, because of other superimposed nations, but leading a Romanian way of life**".
Tired and sick, he retired in 1899 even from the continuing publication of the historical documents, but continues to publish short studies on different subjects, in parallel to his great work. So, in 1901 he published "*Military Romania*" and the study "*The origin and historical importance of the Romanian cavalry*", and in 1902 he was named a member correspondent of the Romanian Geographical Society. In 1904 he published a study about the development of the Romanian language, affirming that "to accept phonetics as a basis for the correct writing and speech, means to distort a common Romanian language, the chronology, the formation and unity of which go back into the most remote of times". In 1906 he wrote an unpublished study regarding "*The military history of the Romanian people, from the most remote times until the 18th century*", and in 1909 he published two very important studies: "*The war of 1330 between King Carol Robert of Hungary and Basarab, the Domn* (TN – the equivalent of king, or prince, ruler of the country) *of The Romanian Country*" and "*The war of 1369-1370 between Ludovic I, the King of Hungary and Vladislav Basarab, the Domn of The Romanian Country"*.
Finally, he devoted himself wholly to Prehistoric Dacia, which took him forty years in all to complete. Only to make it ready for print took him the last eleven years of his life, dedicated to assiduous work, but alas, he died before seeing it published.

Apart from his lengthy travel through Italy, Istria and Dalmatia, he made a number of similar trips, especially in 1899, to the mountain districts of the country, from Buzeu to Mehedinti, to see in person what he had heard about, and to establish the state and value of prehistoric remains of exceptional importance. He always used a scientific method, and, starting with 1893, he wrote, printed and sent far and wide, at his expense, his extremely important **Questionnaire**, about the *historical traditions and antiquities of the countries inhabited by Romanians*, about which he said "Each *village*, each *mountain*, each *valley*, each *town*, has its own *historical legends and traditions*…that go further than the epoch of Dacia's colonization and even to *the epoch of the first kings of Rome".* And he stressed the importance of these memories especially for Romanians, because "*the epoch of our historical life up to 1290ad was without chroniclers. An immense number of events which happened on the territory of Trajan's Dacia, from the first contact of the Romans with the Dacians, to the year 1290ad, were left unrecorded. We lack the chronicles, we lack the documents. The monuments erected, have been destroyed and have vanished, even the peoples who destroyed them have vanished…*"
To this questionnaire he received answers from all the lands inhabited by Romanians, sent mainly by the local school teachers, who were in direct contact with the communities.

In ***Prehistoric Dacia***, Densusianu unveils a past almost entirely unknown, a glorious past for Dacia, for the people who lived in these places who, Densusianu proves, are our direct ancestors. He knew profoundly the classics, and mastered their language, and read them in original, so that he gives the right interpretation of texts formerly appeared with the wrong meaning, owing to the lack of knowledge of the translator.
It is incredible and defies the imagination how he finds, to the last detail, in Romanian legends and ballads, the ancient deeds described in the ancient texts, starting with Homer himself.

His argumentation is solid, well-grounded, extremely well informed. He was accused of advancing hypotheses, but ***he proved***. He proved the millenary continuity of the Romanian people and the conservative force of our nation.

The general essence of his theory is in short the following:
Densusianu starts from the prehistoric man and gradually reconstitutes the biggest empire known to the ancient world, the *Pelasgian empire*. He shows the extraordinary role played for the human civilization by this empire, owing especially to the deified kings Uranos and Saturn, and their wives Gaea and Rhea.
He proves – it can't be said otherwise – that the entire, but absolutely the entire mythology, so-called Greek, was born in the mountains of Dacia, between Buzau and the Iron Gates. The great temple of the world was on the peak Omul, in the Bucegi mountains.
He proves that a principal branch of these Pelasgians spoke a language called by him proto-Latin, which gave birth to Latin and the neo-Latin languages. He shows how tribes of this empire (the basis of which he believes to have been mostly religious), composed mainly of shepherds, and later by metal-workers, descended and founded Troy, Mycenae and Rome.
He tries to recreate the customs, belief and language of these peoples and manages to explain countless historical facts, which so far had been unclear.
If we, Romanians, have resisted the floods of invasions, if we exist, from far beyond the Nister in the east (Dnestr), to Istria, Switzerland and Little Valahia of Bohemia in the west, from south Poland in the north, to Athens and the islands of the Archipelagos in the south, it is not only because the Roman colonists were brought here by Trajan. Our essence is proto-Latin, we were the ancient Arimii (as they were called in remote times), one of the principal tribes of the Pelasgians. One of their branches were Rimii who founded Rome, Aromanii of today already existed, and it was from here that they penetrated far to the end of Asia, the north of Africa, to Spain and Denmark, as in all of these regions it can be observed that their ancient populations were branches of the same people, who dwelt and had their centre especially in Transylvania and Oltenia.

(TN – Dr.C.I.Istrati continues with a long presentation of the work, with quotations and extra supporting material by other authors, the short form of which follows):

Densusianu begins his work with The *Quaternary Epoch – the Paleolithic period*. His first chapter is about *The first inhabitants of Dacia*. He continues with a description of the stone fashioned tools and of the animals which lived then and there: *Felis spelae* (the cave lion), *Bos urus* or *Bos primigenius* (shown on the Moldavian coins and coat of arms), the wooly bison and *Cervus Megacerus*, all of which are still mentioned in Romanian folk poetry. He speaks about the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon man and about the Neolithic invasion of Europe, affirming that *"Here at the Lower Danube and especially in the countries of Dacia, the fact is certain, had formed and coagulated the great and powerful centre of the Neolithic population in Europe".*
He then treats extensively and competently the *prehistoric ceramic of Dacia* and its ornamentation, precursor of that of Troy, Mycenae, central Europe and the Aegean cultural world.
In the following chapter Densusianu treats *The prehistoric monuments of Dacia*, especially *The heroic Pelasgian tumuli and The tumulus or tomb of Achilles in Leuce Island*, which is none other than the Serpents' Island, in the Black Sea. He describes in detail the *Temple of Apollo* on this same island (also called the island of the Hyperboreans), speaks about its later role, establishes which was the country of *Apollo* and *Latona (Leto)* and describes the people of the *Hyperboreans*, generally shepherds, who were the Pelasgians of this region. He proves that after Apollo's cult had moves southwards, this island and temple were consecrated to Achilles' shadow. Finally he presents the *Romanian legend about the divine origin of the "Sacred White Monastery"*, representing this same temple of Apollo.
The author treats then *The commemorative mounds of Osiris*, about *Osiris' expedition to the Ister* and his wars with Typhon in today Oltenia, and writes about *The giant furrow of Novac (Ostrea)*.

(TN – at this point in the preface Dr.Istrati mentions a study of his, about "a number of statuettes representing Egyptian divinities, found in Romania" and includes ten photos of them).

The next chapter studies *The megalithic monuments of Dacia*, and makes comparisons with the ones from western Europe, after which Densusianu treats at length the *Termini liberi Patris* (the great sacred road of the Hyperboreans), of which a considerable part still exists in Basarabia.
He also presents *The megalithic simulacra of the Pelasgian divinities* (on the peaks of the Carpathians), and *The principal prehistoric divinities of Dacia.*
These were: *Uranos (Caelus, Kerus, Cerus manus/Caraiman)* and *Gaea (Earth, Tellus, Terra, Mater, Caia); Saturn (Dokius Caeli filius, Omolos*) and *Rhea (Cybele, Terra Dacia, Dochia, Dochiana),* who represented in a newer form the same divinity of the earth, Gaea.

(TN – Here again, Dr.Istrati adds the description and three photos of a statuette of Cybele found at Romula, Romanati district, in which Cybele is represented sitting on a throne flanked by a lion on each side.
He continues with more photos and descriptions of statuettes of Rhea found in Romania, Greece, Italy and France. He finishes this topic with an important study, including photos, regarding the traditional head dress of the Romanian peasant women, resembling that of a statue of Rhea found in Romania, and continues the presentation of Densusianu's work)

On the same theme of Cybele, Densusianu proves as absolute historical truth, that Sibylla Erythrea or Dacica was born in the mountains of Transylvania. He then presents Saturn's simulacrum as *Omolos*, on the peak Omul in Bucegi mountains, which he says "*was in the prehistoric antiquity the sacred mountain of the pastoral Pelasgian tribes".* He proves that the religious beliefs which later constituted the core of Greek Mythology, spread to the ancient world and especially to Greece from here.
The next chapter describes *The cyclopic altars on Caraiman mountain* and *The Sky Column on the Omul Peak.* He shows that mount Atlas, which in old legends supported the northern pole of the sky, was not in Libya or NW Africa, but in the country of the Hyperboreans. This mountain is the Caucasus of Prometheus' fame. He proves that the Mycenaean civilization was Pelasgian and also proves that the famous Lion's Gate represents the Sky Column of Bucegi Mountains, which, he asserts, represents even the symbol of eternal life for Egyptians, Etruscans, Carthage and Sicily. From *Prometheus* he goes on to talk in depth about the cult of *Mithras*, showing the connection between the two.
Another important chapter is about *The Columns of Hercules*, and he proves again, beyond any doubt, that they were near the Iron Gates on the Danube, after which follows a chapter about the origin of metalworking, north of the Lower Danube, on the territory of Dacia. He also explains the origin of *the Copper tablets of the Hyperboreans, the Tall copper column from the mountains of Olt, the Giant copper crater on top of the Sky Column* and *the Great Gold Column.* While still on these topics, he also discusses *Arabia felix* of Evhemer, *Panchea* island from the Danube delta, and the famous *Gold apples of Gaea*. This chapter is followed by *The golden fleece and the legend of the Argonauts* and he proves again, beyond any doubt, that the capital of Aietes was on the place of today Galati, in the district of Buzau (Buxios), near the mountainous region called Colti (Colchi). And he explains the origin of the Istriens, the Romanian inhabitants of the Istria peninsula and the nearby islands (in northern Adriatic Sea), who were the Colchii sent by king Aietes to catch the Argonauts, but, who, unable to do this, had settled in that region. Densusianu then makes a comparative study of the dialects of the Istriens and Romanians, using as text the Bible's *Parable of the lost son*. Next, he talks about *Vulcan* and presents at length *The Hyperborean Treasure of Pietroasa*, to which he adds his own interpretation of the signs (considered so far to be runes) carved on the big gold torque of the treasure, proving that the signs were not runes and that the treasure did not belong to the Goths, as it had been assumed by others, but Hyperborean. On this occasion he also writes about the Phoenix bird, which he ascertains is the real symbolical bird shown on the old emblems of the Romanian Country. Halfway through his work, Densusianu brings together, in a special, massive chapter *The Pelasgians or Proto-Latins (Arimii)*, their beginnings and prehistoric civilization, the principal branches of this people and their migrations, the southern, eastern, western and northern Pelasgians. He then treats separately the Latins, Turseni, Etruscans, Agathyrses and Blaci (Vlachi), and the ancient laws of Dacia *(antique Valachorum lex)*, after which follows the last vast chapter of the book, *The great Pelasgian Empire*, in which he gives the geographical description of the country of the first Pelasgian kings (gods), describes their rule and wars, includes the

traditional related Romanian folk poems and ballads about Saturn, Hermes, Vulcan and Neptune, continues with *The decline of the Pelasgian empire*, and ends with a large part consecrated to *The Pelasgian language*, starting from Herodotus' time and ending with the *Carmina Saliara* (The Saliare Songs), *the barbarian spells, the Carmen Fratrum Arvalium* (the Song of the Arvali brothers) and the Pelasgian inscription from the island of Lemnos, which he is the first to decipher.

(TN : The author of the preface finishes with praises for the extraordinary scientific and national value of ***Prehistoric Dacia*** and hopes that this great work will be translated in other European languages, so that this new vast treasure of information and material, including the Romanian folk legends, poems, customs, etc, related to it, will revolutionize the established way of thinking about the birth and development of civilizations in Europe and around the Mediterranean).

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THE QUATERNARY ERA – THE PALEOLITHIC PERIOD

I. THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF DACIA.
THE PRIMITIVE MATERIAL AND MORAL CIVILIZATION IN EUROPE

Dacia presents an extreme antiquity in everything.

When studying the prehistoric times of the countries from the Carpathians and the Lower Danube, an ancient disappeared world, the cradle of the **ante-Hellenic civilization**, presents itself before our eyes. Behind the populations known in Greco-Roman antiquity under the name of **Getae** and **Dacians**, stretches back a long series of several thousand years, a buried history of some great events, whose importance had reached far beyond the horizon of this country, the history of a nation, genial, powerful and glorious, who, long before the Trojan times, had founded the first vast world empire, had founded the first cultural unity in Europe and had at the same time established a basis for the moral and material progress in western Asia and in north Africa.

Dacia, this country miraculously endowed by nature with all the goodness of the climate and soil, the work of remote geological times, had formed the first place perfect for the settling and development of the moral and industrial life of the migratory nations. Dacia, during the history of these dark ages, appears as the first geographical metropolis destined, by its particular position, by the abundance of its population and by the diversity of its riches, to extend during the prehistoric epoch, its ethnic and cultural influence, on one hand towards south, in the Balkan peninsula and beyond the Aegean Sea, and on the other hand towards west, on the great and long communication waterway of the Danube.

The civilizing action exercised by the prehistoric ante-Dacian population from the Carpathians and the Lower Danube, over the ante-Hellenic world, was much greater than we can imagine today, on the basis of fragments of monuments and of historical and folkloric traditions which we have from this extremely remote epoch. In this regard we are now only at the dawn of the prehistoric science [1].

[1. TN – Densusianu starts the footnotes by presenting the classification of the prehistoric epochs as they existed at his time: Paleolithic, Neolithic, Bronze and Iron, and their characteristics, after which he says: "From a chronological point of view, the Paleolithic period corresponds with the quaternary era of the geologists and with that part of the tertiary epoch, in the deposits of which we find stone objects, supposed to have been cut by an intelligent being. And the beginning of the Neolithic period corresponds with the disappearance of the "tarand stag" from the central and western parts of Europe.
In the countries of ancient **Dacia**, **the intermediary epoch of copper** follows immediately after the Neolithic. This stage is characterized by tools and weapons made of pure copper. Most of these artifacts of copper have the shape of the stone tools (**Pulszky**, Die Kupferzeit in Ungarn.Budapest,1884)". The author presents then the different archaeological divisions of the Stone Age (Chellean, Musterian, Solutre and Magdalene), and also adds a table with these divisions. Speaking about the duration of the Quaternary epoch, he says that science could not yet fix the duration of the geological epochs with at least an approximate chronology, but that the doctrine about a lent and regular action of physical forces and agents was prevalent at his time].

We start here the study of these primitive and mysterious times – and we will tread a very new and difficult road - regarding the first beginnings of the civilization in Dacia.

The first question presented here is, in which epoch appear in the countries of Dacia the first traces of human existence?

Today, owing to tireless investigations made lately by the three sister sciences, geology, paleontology and prehistoric archaeology, it is certain and incontestable that man was scattered over a large part of the surface of our globe even in the first times of the quaternary epoch (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique Paris1889 pag.34); that he was contemporary almost in all the countries of Europe, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, England, Italy and Russia, with the great mammals extinguished since the flood; that in this epoch man did not know the use of metals and had no other better tools than those of roughly cut stone, and animal bones, worked in a totally primitive shape. Or, in other words: today the prehistoric science has definitely established that in Europe man lived and witnessed the phenomena which characterized the entire quaternary epoch. He saw the violent actions of nature in those remote times, he lived when great masses of glaciers covered the high mountains, the valleys and even part of the plains of Europe; he contemplated the flood and its consequences and assisted to the last mountain lifting action of the earth, when different chains of mountains rose and lengthened [2].

[2. **A Romanian geological tradition**. In Romanian folk tales there is often presented a vague memory about the mountain building movements which took place in remote geological epochs, when the mountain chains lengthened and hit each other. This phenomenon is characterized in ancient traditions of the Romanian people by the words "**when/ where the mountains beat their heads**" (**Ispirescu**, Legends 1882 p.126; **Fundescu**, Tales 1875 p.35, etc). The geological science today has decided that different mountain chains, even the same mountain unit, were not formed at once, but were the consequence of many repeated mountain building upheavals, so the mountains which beat their heads remind us the consecutive lifting, crashing and smashing of the solid crust of the earth, happened during the geological epochs. This tradition, that mountains are a later formation of the earth crust is also found in **Hesiodus**' Theogony (v.126-129). There exists even today a very widely spread tradition with the Romanian people, that **in the beginning the earth was flat**, without hills and mountains. This tradition has a semi-religious form. It is sung in carols and it attributes the lifting of the hills and mountains to St. Ion and Mos Ajun (TN – Old man eve/ referring to Christmas), (both identical with Ianus of the Romans).

That too-high God, let me (Ion-Sant-Ion) measure the earth,
The earth with the walking, the sky with the rod…,
I found too much earth, I pushed it, I made hills, I made valleys,
I made beautiful mountains, covered with snow.
(Communicated by Gr.Craciunas, Ciubanca, Transylvania)

We are two little angels, sent by God,
to measure the earth, and we found too much.
We wander, what are we to do? Then Mos-Ajun said:
High dark mountains, deep valleys, cold springs!
(Communicated from Baltati, Ramnicul-Sarat district)

In those remote geological times begin the first pages of man's history in Dacia. We admit that until today, in the alluvial deposits of Dacia have not been found yet the bones of the quaternary man, but other important traces of his existence and activity have been discovered. From these

finds we form the immovable conviction, that man lived in part of Dacia's countries at a time, when his miserable life conditions made him to fight with the gigantic bear and the ferocious lion for the occupation of the caves; when he, for the improvement of his material life, was forced to chase the wild horse, to catch the furious ox and to attack the mammoth and so many other powerful and ferocious animals, without other weapons but those he made owing to his intelligence [3].

[3. **The cave lion (Felis spelaea) in the eastern parts of Europe**. Different fossil remains of the cave lion were found in Transylvania, in the cave of Almas, near Homorod river, in Odorhei district. And **John Lubbock** (L'homme prehistorique, 1876 p.267), tells us about a bone of the cave lion found in the **Carpathian Mountains**. Other quaternary remains of this lion species were found more recently in the cave from Poracs, in the **northern Carpathians of Hungary** (**Nyary**, Az Aggteleki barlang.6.71). And the natural history museum of Vienna is in possession of the most complete skeleton of this powerful carnivorous animal, found in the cave Sloup in Moravia, so its geographical zone in our regions reached up to the lands north of the Carpathians. The **cave lion** lived in the eastern parts of Europe until late in historical times. **Herodotus** (VII.c.125.126) relates to us a curious happening: how around 482bc, when **Xerxes** passed through Thrace and Macedonia with his formidable army, several packs of lions descended from the mountains and attacked during the night the camels, leaving the people and all the other transport animals untouched. The geographical zone of the lions of the Balkan peninsula was in his time, according to Herodotus, between the river Nestus (today Kara-Su) of Thrace and Achelous (today Aspropotamos) of Acarnania, that is in the **Rhodopi** and **Pindus** mountains, and he also adds that only in these lands are born lions in Europe.

In our old **heroic** folk poetry (in carols, which is one of the most antique type of our folk poetry, also in the folk spells) there exist even today different traditions about the **European lion**.

"The lion with the lioness, Samca with Samcoaica" says one spell. In ancient Indian language, *simha* means lion. With the Romans, *samca* is the name given in prehistoric times to the leopard. In our heroic songs are also mentioned the lions which once existed in the lands of the **Nister**, especially in the **wastelands of Lower Basarabia**, which in Roman times was called the desert of the Getae (**Alecsandr**i, Folk poems p.77; **Teodorescu**, Folk poems p.446).

The primitive ox (bos primigenius), contemporary with the quaternary man, had a gigantic size, almost twice bigger than our domestic ox, and belonged to the hoary race of cattle, which lives today in the Romanian countries, Transylvania, Hungary, Stiria and Russia. The race of **wild oxen** lived in our parts until historical times. **Herodotus** relates the following: There are in these parts of Macedonia (Rhodopi and Pindus) a lot of lions and wild oxen. The horns of these oxen are of a giant size, and they are imported into Greece as a commercial article (l.VII.126). This wild ox, about which Herodotus speaks, is shown having a particular natural vigor, on the gold vases discovered at Vaphio near Sparta, and on the mural paintings from Tirynth during the Pelasgian dynasties of the Peloponnesus (Bulletin de Correspondance hellenique, An.XV ,1892, pl. XV; Revue enciclopedique 1891, p.250).

Cesar, who in the interest of his vast plans for the expansion of Roman domination, had been the first to study from a military point of view, the lands from north of the Danube, communicates to us in his Commentaries the following: "There still exists in **Germany** another species of oxen (wild), which are called **Uri**. These oxen (urii), are a little smaller than the elephants, but by shape, color and type they resemble the bulls. Their strength is big and big is their speed. They don't spare either men, or wild animals, once they see them. The people dig pits in the earth, following a certain system, in order to catch them and then they kill them in these same pits (B.G.VI.28)". **Isidor**, the bishop of Seville (d.636), also writes: "**Urii** are a species of wild oxen of **Germany**, that have enormous horns, which are used for drinking vessels for royal tables, their inner capacity being very big (Etym.XII.1.34)". As we know, the Getae also used oxen horns as drinking vessels for drinking wine (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib.XXX.c.12).

And the naturalist **Pliny** (VIII.15) transmits the following note about the **fauna of Scythia and Germany**: "Scythia produces very few animals because here the bushes are missing. Few animals also are found in Germany, country which is a neighbor of Scythia. But in Germany are important the species of **wild oxen**, meaning **bisons** with manes, and **urii**, which have an extraordinary force and velocity and which the ignorant people call **wild buffaloes** (bubali)". As we know, **Great Germany** or "barbarian" Germany of the Latin authos, was neighboring Dacia. Moreover, the **Hercinic forest of Cesar** and the **ethnographic Germany of Tacitus**, also extended over the northern Carpathians of Hungary and Transylvania. So the geographical area of the uri and bisons, during the Roman epoch, included not only the mountainous regions of Germany, but also of Dacia. We also have a proof of this

in the history of the Dacian war. **Suidas** writes: Trajan dedicates to Jove some silver cups and a gold gilt **ox horn, of an extraordinary size**, as gift from his first victories against the Getae.
In the oldest examples of our folk literature, the carols and ballads, the primitive ox (bos primigenius, bos urus) appear under the name of **boul sur** (**Mandrescu**, Folk lit. p.212; **Daul**, Carols p.41). The epithet "**sur**" is a Romanian archaism from the same family as **urus** of the Celts, and has the meaning of **wild** or **of the mountain**. The coats of arms of Moldova show the figure of the urus head (**bo-ur**), and not at all of the bison with mane (**Boliac**, Buciumul, An.I, 1862, p.132).

Cervus megaceros in Romanian traditions – Among the different species of the fauna of the quaternary epoch, which populated in big part the plains and mountains of Dacia in that epoch, was also the so-called cervus megaceros. This antediluvian deer (stag), the most magnificent animal of the vanished fauna, lived in Europe and especially in Ireland, until the 12th century of our era. Its arched and proud horns were gigantic and gave it a very imposing aspect. It is mentioned in **Homer**'s Iliad (XVI 158) and Odyssey (X 158). Ulysses chases in the wide island of the nymph Circe, a big stag with lofty horns, a **gigantic monster**. Different traditions about cervus megaceros have been conserved until today in our old folk literature. So, in the semi-religious carols of the Romanian people, it is often mentioned a noble and proud stag called **Cerbul sur**, which, by its beauty, size and qualities attributed to it, can not be other than the most majestic stag that had existed at any time on the face of the earth, cervus megaceros (**Teodorescu**, Folk poems, p. 65-66). The speed of this giant stag being very big, the hunters in the Romanian carols pray to God, to send a rain, to soften the earth, to trap the stag in mud so that they could catch it. This Romanian tradition about the way of chasing the giant stag, clarifies for us a very curious fact which the paleontologists could not explain so far. In **Hungary**, most of the skeletons of cervus megaceros were found in the clay strata near the banks of Tisa. And in **Ireland**, as **Figuier** tells us (La terre avant le deluge.1863.p.321), the skeletons of this antique animal are found in the swampy deposits near Curragh, and it can be remarked, says he, that almost all these skeletons are found in the same attitude, with the head raised upwards, the neck stretched, the horns thrown backwards, as if the animal had been trapped in a swampy terrain and had tried to breathe until the last moment of its life. The epithet of "**sur**" often applied to this antique stag, is usually used, in Romanian folk tales and poems, only for the gigantic or uncanny animals, for example "boul sur", "taurul sur", "vultur sur" or "sur-vultur" (**Teodorescu**, Poems, p.68; **Marienescu**, Carols, p.26; **Marian**, Romanian funerals, p.217; **Saineanu**, Tales,p.375, 388). This epithet belongs to the archaic Romanian language and is not only synonymous, but identical with the Celtic **urus**, with the Pelasgian aspiration **s** added at the beginning. So, from the point of view of its meaning, **cerbul sur** means only **cerbul codrului** (TN – the stag of the woods)].

The material proof in this regard is offered by the finds of the primitive tool industry of the people belonging to this epoch. On the territory of the town **Miscolti**, situated at the feet of the northern Carpathians, in the upper parts of Tisa, in Borsod county, and also on the territory of today Romania in **Vlasca** district, were discovered weapons or tools cut of flint, representing two Paleolithic types of Chellean, which are typical of the interglacial quaternary epoch. But, apart from these positive remains, that prove the existence of the quaternary man in the countries of Dacia, there is also the powerful ethnologic proof based on the geographical expansion of European man in this epoch, so the conclusion is that man, during the interglacial period of the quaternary times, was acclimatized in all of Europe. We therefore can not limit, either from a palaeontological or archaeological point of view, the geographical zone of man in the quaternary epoch, only to the northwestern region of the Carpathians, and can not separate the countries of Dacia, from Central and Western Europe [4].

[4. **The inner sea in the countries of Dacia, in later geological times.**

When we state here, from a palaeontological and archaeological point of view, the existence of humans in the lands of Dacia, even since the quaternary epoch, we don't want to assert by this that all the regions of this country, as they present themselves today, could have been inhabited by man in that

remote epoch. The physiognomy of the countries of Dacia has not always been the same as in the historical epoch. A significant part of the extended plains of Hungary were, even at the beginning of the Neolithic period, covered by large masses of fresh water, which little by little, during the course of several thousands of years, have retreated through the cataracts of the Danube and even maybe through subterranean channels. Even today, a significant district in the north-east of Hungary (TN – today in Romania) is called **Maramures**, meaning **dead sea, mare morta** (the Cimbri called the northern ocean **Morimarusam**, hoc est **mortuum mare**. Pliny, H. N. IV.27.4).

On another hand, the historical documents of Middle Age Hungary mention often different swamps, lakes and marshes in the Tiso-Danubian basin, which in those times were called **Mortua, Mortva** and **Mortua magna**, meaning dead water. Even the name **Mures**, of the principal river of Transylvania, which appears in the medieval historical documents under the name **Morisius** (Cod.Arpadianus, XVIII 62. 1291), **Marusius** (Kemeny, Nititia, II.41), **Morusius** (Schuller, Archiv.I.p680), is evidence that in a remote time the basin of this river was only a dead water (Marusa). And on another hand, there still exists in Romania, an old and widespread tradition that the plains of the Romanian country, of Hungary and the valleys of Transylvania, were once covered by an internal sea. So, **George Brancovici**'s Chronicle, written around 1690, contains the following tradition about the sea in the countries of Dacia.

"This Pombie (Pompei the Great), cut the bridge at Byzantium, so that the black sea entered into the white sea and **it is told that the countries of Moldova, Muntenia and Ardel were left dry**" (Ar.Densusianu, Revista critica literara 1893, p367).

This tradition, that in a remote epoch the Black Sea had no issue, was first stated by **Strato from Lampsac** (d.270bc). The Black Sea, maintains he, might have once been completely closed, and the strait at Byzantium might have opened because of the enormous pressure of the masses of water brought in the Euxine Pontus by the great rivers. The same may have happened also, says he, with the Mediterranean Sea, which, following a great accumulation of river waters, might have broken the western barrier, and, following its flowing into the external sea, the former swampy places of Europe might have drained (**Strabo**, Geogr.I.3.4).

Another tradition, identical in fact with that of Brancovici's chronicle, is communicated from the village Habud, in the **Prahova** district: A long time ago, the land of this country, this tradition tells us, was covered with water, which could never drain, because at there was a rock mountain at the Black Sea. The Turks (Thracians, Trojans?) started to cut that mountain. They dug for twenty four years and still could not finish, but a great earthquake came and broke that mountain in two, and immediately the water drained in the sea. Finally, another tradition is transmitted from Banat, Maidan village: "We heard from our elders that the land which we inhabit now, might have once been a sea of water, and only in the mountains dwelt some **wild men**, whom our ancestors defeated, then settled here. Our king Trajan opened the way for the water here, at **Babacaia**. (Baba Caia, Caia the Old Woman). We note that in Romanian traditions Hercules also appears often under the name Trojan). When there was water here, the people got about in boats and sailboats. It is said that the "cula" (TN - a fortified house) from Verset might have been built in those times. One could see from there to another "cula" across the Danube, and to another, across the Mures; when an enemy boat came, a big light was made on top of the "cula", to let the other brothers know that the enemy had entered the country". We also note here that in Hungary there still exists a folk tradition that the plains of that country were once covered by water, which later had drained through the strait of the Iron Gates (**Ertekezesek**).

But what were the situation, customs and conditions of life of the Paleolithic human races in Europe? We are presented here with one of the most important, and at the same time, most complicated questions of primitive European ethnology.

The scientific results offered by the palaeontological research done until today, in the geological strata of the quaternary epoch in Europe, present two human principal races, on different scales of their physical and intellectual development.

One of these two fossil races is represented by a portion of cranium exhumed in 1700 at **Cannstadt** near Stuttgart, and by another important specimen, the cranium found in 1856 in the cave from **Neanderthal** near Dusseldorf. Both these human fossils present, from an anthropological point of view, the same ethnic characteristics and they figure in the science of today under the generally adopted name of **the race of Neanderthal**, which is considered as the

human European race from the epoch of the mammoth. This primitive human race generally presents a dolycho-platy-cephalic, or a longish and depressed head, a narrow and sloping forehead and extremely developed brow ridges. The people of Neanderthal or Cannstadt had a stature more small than high; they were robust and stocky, with short and muscular members, but, according to the opinions of today's anthropologists, they were unable to sustain a vertical position, but were half bent towards the knees, exactly like the anthropoids (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, p.328; **Fraipont**, Les caverns et leurs habitants, 1896, p.69; **Bertrand**, La Gaule avant les Gaulois, p.70; **De Mortillet**, Musee prehistorique, Pl.XXX). Still to this primitive human species from the mammoth epoch, belong the fossil bones discovered in 1866 in the cave from Spy in Belgium. The skeletons exhumed at Spy present the same anatomical particularities of the craniums from Cannstadt and Neanderthal. Even more, the cranium from Spy exaggerates some of the physical characteristics of the fossil man of Neanderthal (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, p.87, 329; **Fraipont**, Les caverns, p.70).

To these primitive inhabitants of Europe refer the following words of **Lucretius** (De rer.nat.lib.V):

Then (the first times of human history), the human genus was much tougher. During the course of several thousand years of the sun's rotation on the sky, they lived everywhere like wild animals. They did not know the use of fire, or the use of animal skins, or to cover their body with the furs of wild animals, but they dwelt in forests, in the caves of the mountains, in the great woods, hiding under bushes their dirty members, or when they were forced to defend themselves or to shelter themselves from wind and rain. They were incapable to think about common work and did not know to establish among themselves some customs, or laws, but one grabbed the prey one could, and ran away with it, led by one's instinct to take care of one and to live for one.

We find the same prehistoric tradition with the ancient Latin people, which **Virgil** (Aeneid. lib.VIII.v.314) communicates to us. Once, says he, dwelt in these woods a race of humans born from the tough trunks of the oak trees (the Fauns). They had no customs, or religion. They did not know how to yoke the oxen, how to gather wealth for life's needs, or how to keep what they had gained, but lived like savages, eating only grasses and game [5].

[5. **The primitive human race of the Satyrs in Europe, Asia and Africa**.
The Greek and Roman antique literature has transmitted a long series of ethnographical traditions, regarding a human primitive race called of the **Satyrs**. So, **Hesiodus** mentions in one of his fragments, a type of wicked men called Satyrs, who were **incapable to learn any human type of work**. These Satyrs appear generally with a human figure, but wild and tough, with bristle hair, flat and snub nose, pointed ears, knotted neck and a tuft of long hairs hanging at the lower end of the spine (more an exaggeration of the Greek artists) (Frag. XCI). These Satyrs dwelt in woods and mountains and are shown as lascivious lovers of women. These Satyrs were also called ***Seilenoi***, sing. ***Seilenos***, word which by its etymology is identical with **Silvanus**. In Romanian **silha** = forest. In these places, writes **Lucretius** once dwelt the **Satyrs**, who, with their noise and games broke the quiet silence of the night (De rer. Nat. IV. 582). This primitive human race of the Satyrs is also mentioned in the old geographical descriptions of Asia. "In the eastern mountains of India", writes **Pliny**, in the land called of the **Catarcluzii**, there are also **Satyrs**. These Satyrs are some very wicked animals, who make much damage. They walk and run on fours and on two legs. Their face is like men's. But, because of their agility, they can be caught only when they are old or sick. Tauron says that **Coromanzii** are a sort of wild men, who don't know how to talk, and express themselves only by horrible howling. Their body is

hairy, their eyes are blue and they canine teeth are like fangs" (H.N.VII.2.17). This communication of Pliny about the race of the Satyrs in Asia, is wholly confirmed by the new discoveries of anthropology. The naturalist **A. de Mortillet** publishes in "Revue encyclopedique", 1895 p.73, under the title "An intermediary being between man and monkey", a note about the cranium discovered in Java in 1891 by the military doctor Eug.Dubois. Finally, the Roman geographer **Pomponius Mela** tells us that on the territory of Africa, near the western Ethiopians, among other barbarian and nomadic tribes are also **Satyrs**, who have no roofs, no stable dwellings, who barely resemble men and are half wild animals (I.4 and 8). Man with hair on most of his body appears also in Europe, represented on some engravings from the end of the quaternary epoch (**De Mortillet**, Musee prehistorique, Pl.XXVII, fig.202, 203). The traditions of the Roman epoch also tell us about the hairy men (**pilosi**) (**Isidorus**, Etym.VIII.11.103). Finally, Hannonis, the duke of the Carthaginians tells us about the wild and hairy people. During the flowering period of his country, he had undertaken a naval expedition beyond the Columns of Hercules, and after his return he presented to the temple of Saturn, or Juno, the skins of two wild and hairy women which he had caught (**Hannonis Carthaginensium Regis** Periplus, in Geographi graeci minores, I.Ed.Didot.p.13). This happening is confirmed also by **Pliny** in his Natural History (VI.36), in which he says that the skins of the two women could be seen in this temple until the fall of Carthage. With the Romanian people there exists even today a series of traditions about a primitive human race, hairy and with big canine teeth. So, in Romanian spells, which contain precious elements from prehistoric times, is often mentioned a being, unknown to later epochs, a wild man, usually big and hairy, a constant enemy of man.

"The big man came, from the big woods, **hairy man** and frightful,
With **hairy** hands, and **hairy** legs, with **bulging eyes and big pointy teeth**,
With big face, **with terrible look**. And he came…"
(Marian, Spells, p.242)

This hairy man, with big pointy teeth and terrible look, who dwelt in woods, bears also in Romanian traditions the name "Mos" (TN – Old man).

"**Mosu** comes out of a house, with **hairy** hands, with **hairy** legs, with **hairy** nails, with **hairy** fingers…"
(Sezatoarea, An.III, 1894, p.119)

And we have to note that in the ritual of these spells are usually used stone implements. A clear proof that this hairy man belonged to the ante-metallic epoch (Sezatoarea, An 1892, p.83).
In the southeast parts of Germany also exist traditions about "**wilde Leute**", called too "**Waldleute**", "**Holzleute** and **Moosleute**" (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, I, 451). But the German tradition is borrowed from the old Pelasgian tribes (Neolithic), who had once dwelt in those lands. Holzleute are only the wild men mentioned by Virgil (Aen.VIII, 315) and Homer (Odys, XIX, 160). And Moosleute are "mosii" with hairy hands from the above spell. In any case, the race of the Satyrs and the "pilosii", whose remnants still lived until historical times, were from the same primitive family of the quaternary race of the Neanderthal, Cannstadt and Spy man].

The second fossil human race from the quaternary epoch, is represented by the craniums and bones discovered firstly in the station Cro-Magnon, in the Vezere valley in France.

This human race, to which was it was applied the name of **Cro-Magnon**, dominates definitely in the western parts of Europe, towards the end of the quaternary epoch, and from a physical and intellectual point of view, appears to have been much more superior than the race of Neanderthal. The Cro-Magnon men were, according to the palaeontological studies, a fine dolycho-cephalic race, powerful and intelligent. They differed from the Neanderthal-Cannstadt-Spy race, especially by a wide and vertical forehead, by the dimensions of the cranium, by the lack of brow ridges, by a face also wide, and by a tall stature of 178-185cm for men (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, p.105, 330; **De Mortillet**, Musee prehistorique, Pl.XXX; **Bertrand**, La Gaule avant les Gaulois, p.69, 267; **Fraipont**, Les caverns et leurs habitants, p.131). Everywhere, the fossil race of Cro-Magnon, judging by its intelligent type, by the remains of its tool industry and by its

conditions of living, possessed a significant level of civilization. Apart from cutting the stone, which presents a number of various forms, the primitive civilization of the Cro-Magnon is also characterized by an extensive development of the artifacts of animal bones and horns. Even more, some tribes of this race possessed a very developed inclination for engraving and sculpture. Finally, the people of Cro-Magnon knew a rudimentary art of making clay pots (**Fraipont**, Les caverns et leurs habitants, p.102; **Bertrand**, La Gaule avant les Gaulois, p.112), and there are even some indications that they had begun to also know the importance of some cereals, like the oats and wheat. Other characteristic feature of this quaternary race, was its tendency, manifested under different forms, to tame some animal species. In the Paleolithic sites of this population appear the first traces of semi-domestication of some animals, the horse, ox and the "tarand stag" (deer) [6].

> [6. The horse appears as domestic even in the Solutre epoch. On different quaternary engravings it is represented with the rein in his mouth. On a horn fragment discovered in France at Tursac (Dordogne), it is engraved the figure of a man with a club on his shoulder, guarding horses. And similarly, the "tarand stag" and the ox, appear in a semi-domesticated state towards the end of the quaternary epoch (**Bertrand**, La Gaule avant les Gaulois, p.262; **De Mortillet**, Musee prehistorique, Pl. XXVII; **Zaborowsky**, L'home prehistorique, p.74)].

This fossil race of Cro-Magnon, which appears even in the quaternary epoch, in a remarkable physical development, can not in any case to be considered as an improvement of the European type of Neanderthal. On the contrary, all their physical and moral qualities show the people of Cro-Magnon to have been more of an invasionary race.

In any case though, the time of the appearance of this prehistoric race in Europe, seems to have been a lot more remote than it has been considered so far. The fossil groups of Cro-Magnon people appear, even in the quaternary epoch, to have been scattered in different parts of ancient Gaul, also in the Iberian Peninsula, in part of northwest Africa and as far as the Canaries islands. Even the first flint tools, considered by prehistoric archaeology to be from the beginning of the quaternary epoch (Chellean), which present a quite regular, and often elegant shape, don't seem to have been the artifacts of the undeveloped race of Neanderthal, but the work of a more superior type of men. Everywhere, the type and level of maturity of the race of Cro-Magnon, its inclination towards domestication of animals, the coincidence of their dwellings with the sites of the Neolithic population, finally, the ornamentation used by this race, all this presents the people of Cro-Magnon to have been more of a separated branch, probably during the mysterious times of even the tertiary era, from a great common trunk, whose mass invasion of Europe will take place about the beginning of the Neolithic epoch.

We therefore establish that:

The human period in Dacia, exactly as in the other parts of Europe, stretches back several tens of thousands of years, at least to the first half of the quaternary epoch.

Or, in other words, before the Abii and Agavii, mentioned by Homer's Iliad, before the Titans, mentioned by Hesiodus, there lived in the countries of Europe and in Dacia in particular, two human races, with different types and customs, one on the most inferior level of physical and intellectual development, the Neanderthal race, a type of people without society, customs and laws, whose origin we do not know; and another invasionary human race, entirely different from the first one, having a superior body constitution and being on a significant grade of semi-civilization, a woodland population, whose migrations and cultural beginnings happened far beyond the quaternary times. These two human quaternary races were then overtaken, defeated and destroyed, and maybe in a small part assimilated, by the new invaders of the Neolithic epoch. Their moral and natural history finishes with the quaternary epoch. They had no more influence on the following epochs.

(TN – I must add here, at the end of this chapter, some very recent news.
On the 20th of May 2005, an article appeared in the daily paper "Romania libera" (Free Romania), entitled: "El Mundo" praises the fossil discoveries in Romania". It says: The human fossil mandible discovered in 2003 in a cave in the Western Carpathians (Muntii Apuseni), identified by Romanian and American palaeontologists as being the oldest remains of modern man found in Europe so far, raises a lively interest in the world public opinion. "El mundo" a prestigious Spanish paper, has published yesterday an article in which describes the astonishing discoveries in our country. Apart from being 35,000 years old,……the fossils are of great value because of the large number of pieces, with very different anatomical characteristics, which offer complex information about individuals of different sex and age).

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THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD

II. THE NEOLITHIC INVASION. THE ANCIENT PELASGIAN CURRENT.

The diluvial times have passed, and we enter the second prehistoric period, so-called of the polished stone. This epoch constitutes a new era of fundamental moral and social transformation of the ancient world. A new and unexpected civilization flows over Europe.
The Neolithic epoch is especially characterized by the introduction of domestic animals, by the culture of the cereals and textile plants, by the art of navigation, by a greater ability in fabricating the stone tools; finally, by the first religious dogma, by funeral tumuli, by megalithic monuments and by a strong social organization. But this entire material and moral civilization of the Neolithic epoch in Europe, belongs to a new people, immigrated in these parts from another continent, and not at all to the primitive indigenous races. This new ethnic immigration in Europe constitutes the so-called **Neolithic invasion**, the most expansive invasion known to history.

Even around the beginning of the Neolithic epoch, appear in Europe new ethnic types, two races of men, one of which especially, dolycho-cephalic, was endowed with a more superior intelligence, with great ideas, with strong actions and with social instincts more developed. From what the science of archaeology has established, and from the moral patrimony which they brought with them, it is known that these people came to Europe **from the central lands of Asia**.
The first Neolithic masses, composed of immense pastoral and agricultural tribes, coming from the Altai mountains in Central Asia, after leaving it, probably even during the Paleolithic epoch, and after staying for some hundreds of years near the Caspian Sea and the Lower Ural mountains, continued slowly their migration westwards, along the northern shores of the Black Sea; then, attracted towards south by a sweeter climate and a more abundant vegetation, these bellicose, mostly pastoral populations flowed, with their countless flocks, over the plains and the fertile valleys of Moldova and the Romanian Country.

Here, at the Lower Danube and especially in the countries of Dacia – this fact is certain – formed and coalesced the great and powerful centre of the Neolithic population in Europe; the centre of a new race of people, of a tall and vigorous stature, with an old patriarchal organization, with severe religious ideas and with a passion, brought probably from Asia, to sculpt in live rock the enormous statues of its divinities. These new conquerors of the ancient world brought with them to Europe the new civilizing elements, founded here the first organized states, and gave a new direction to the fate of humanity. In the course of many hundreds of years, this active and laborious race, endowed with a miraculous power of growth and expansion, continued its migrations from the Lower Danube toward the southern regions. From the summits, valleys

and plains of the Carpathians, countless new pastoral tribes continuously crossed the great river of the ancient world, and flowed in compact and organized groups over the entire Balkan Peninsula. This is the great **southern** current, or **Carpatho-Mycenic**, current which, coming from Central Asia, had formed its first European country at the Carpathians, where it had put in place the first moral basis of the new civilization, which later developed so strongly in Greece and on the shores of Asia Minor. In other words, this is the ancient **Pelasgian** or ***Palaeochton*** current, or of **the ancient earth dwellers** (**earthlings**) (TN – **vechii pamanteni**), or of **the people born straight from the earth** (***gegeneis***), as they called themselves [1].

[1. We call the memorable migration, which had extended over **continental and insular Greece**, the **Carpatho-Mycenic** current. This is the only name which corresponds, from a cultural and geographical point of view, to this movement, and this name is even more justified, when we discover that Mycenae, legendary metropolis of ante-Hellenic culture, had as sacred emblem a prehistoric monument from the countries of Dacia (to be seen in the following chapters). Mycenae reduces therefore its ancient origins, to a population arrived in Argos from the valleys and summits of the Carpathians.
The lands of Greece appear to have been conquered by the new current in Neolithic times. The Paleolithic tool industry on the territory of ancient Ellada is not represented. On the other hand, remains of Neolithic civilization are to be found in the most antique Pelasgian centers of Greece, from Tyrinth to Mycenae and Orchomenos, although not in such a great measure as at Hissarlik (near Troy) in Asia Minor (**Perrot**, La Grece primitive, p.58, 115). This Neolithic population of Greece was **Pelasgian** (**Reinach**, Les origins des Aryens, p.113). "From traditions and historical probabilities… it can be said that the Hellenic Pelasgians had **descended to Greece from the northern regions**. After having crossed **Thrace** and **Macedonia**, they had occupied **Epirus** and **Thessaly**; from there, they reached, little by little, **central Greece** and the **Peloponnesus** (**Duruy**, Histoire des Grecs, I, 1887, p.44). This powerful ethnic current of the Neolithic epoch, descended from the Balkan peninsula, not only to Greece and Asia Minor, but also to Syria and Egypt. In North Africa, and especially in Upper Egypt, writes the erudite archaeologist Morgan, the Neolithic civilization presents a European character. The same types of the new tool industry are common to Egypt, central and southern Europe and Syria. Even the shape of the arrow points is identical in Egypt and in Europe (**Morgan**, Recherches sur les origins de l'Egypte. L'age de la pierre et les metaux, Paris, 1896).

The **Pelasgians** had an ancient tradition that their genus was born straight from the earth (***gegeneis***). **Eschyl** (Supplices, v .250) presents **Pelasg**, their national patriarch, speaking towards Danaos the following words: "I am **Pelasg**, **the son of the ancient earth dweller**, **the one born from the earth**". And **Asius** writes: "Pelasg, the one who resembled the gods, **was born by the black Earth, on the summits of those lofty mountains, to be the beginner of the race of the mortals** (**Pausanias**, Descriptio Graeciae, VIII, 1. 4; **Dionysios of Halicarnassus**, Antiq.Rom. I. 36; **Quintilliani**, Inst. III. 77). In fact, this archaic tradition has been preserved to this day with the Romanian people. Romanian legends tell us that the inhabitants of this country are a new type of people, who have "**emerged**" on earth after the destruction by flood of the first race of humans. And in a Romanian spell, the sick man is called "**earthling**" (TN – **pamantean**), word which is identical by its meaning with ***gegeneis*** (**Lupascu**, Medicina babelor, p.13)].

But this powerful Neolithic migration forms only one part of the great ethnic invasion which characterizes this epoch. Other pastoral tribes, other social groups, which also came from Asia towards Europe, following in the steps of the first Neolithic current, being unable to reach the Lower Danube, advanced across Basarabia and upper Moldova and, taking the direction of the northern arch of the Carpathians, reached Bukovina, Galitia, Silezia, Moravia, Bohemia and lower Austria (**Szombathy**, Correspondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft fur Anthropologie, XXV, 1894, p.98). A significant part of these new Neolithic masses turned then southwards. Some tribes passed over the northern Carpathians and settled in the upper parts of Tisa, while others

descended on the March valley and spread over Pannonia, Noric, Upper Dalmatia and then advanced towards the Alps and Italy. Finally, the rest of these masses of migrants, pushed on by new colonists, who came at their rear, continued their westwards migration along the northern bank of the Danube and, passing over Bohemia and Germany, advanced towards Gaul, the Pyrenees, Belgium and Brittany, leaving everywhere in its wake, scattered tribes and traces of its primitive tool industry and cult.

This is **the second Neolithic or central current**, which in Europe presents two well established branches, the Carpatho-Pannonic-Alpine and the Carpatho-Gallic (**Bertrand**, La Gaule avant les Gauloios, p.206, 256). This current introduced then in central and western Europe, the same uniform Neolithic culture, similar to that from the Carpathians of Dacia, the same industrial progress, the same pastoral life, the same practice of agriculture, the same religious doctrines, the same organization of the cult and the society, and finally, the same idiom or common language of the first Neolithic currents.

But the mass ethnic movement towards Europe, begun in Asia, continues during the course of this entire epoch. Apart from the first two great Neolithic currents, which had brought in Europe an immense population, other new groups, but less considerable, which had also left the regions of ancient Asia in unknown circumstances, appear at the eastern gates of Europe [2].

[2. About this **extraordinary number of people** in the prehistoric times, the scholiast of Homer writes: "It is said that the earth, oppressed by the immense multitude of the people lacking in piety, had asked Jove to relieve her of this load. With this purpose, Jove firstly incited the Theban war, in which many died. Then, although Jove could have destroyed all these people with the lightning and the floods, because Momus (a son of the night) had been opposed to this, Jove followed his advice, and planned the war between the Greeks and the Barbarians (Trojans), by which war the earth was relieved, because many were killed". This tradition, Homer's scholiast tells us, could be found in the **Cypric Songs** of the poet Stasin (**Homer** Carmina, Ed. Didot, p.591, 592). And the poet **Valerius Flaccus** in his Argonautics (VI.33), speaking about the regions near the Riphaei mountains (Dacia and Scythia), says: "These countries, which spread under the constellations of the two dippers and the gigantic dragon, are the most populated, compared to any other region". And finally, **Herodotus** (V.3), speaking about the populations from the north of Greece writes: "the **Thracians** are, after the Indians, the most numerous nation on the face of the earth, and if they were governed by a single man, and if they could unite among themselves, then they would be never defeated, the most powerful among all peoples".

With Romanians, has been preserved until today the memory of this countless multitude of people, which once lived in the lands of Dacia. Quite a long time ago, says a tradition from the village Zelisteanca, Buzeu district, there was in these places a **crowded population** and because of that it was called "**Puedia**"; those people were destroyed by the will of God (I.Voiculescu). And from the village Basesci, Falciu district it is related: "By the word **Poedia**, the old people understand such a multitude of people, that there was no more room for them to stay together. They say that at the time of Poedia there were many villages on the territory of the village Schiopeni. What happened with those peoples? The old men say that God must have destroyed them, because they were too many (I.Ghibanescu). So, this is in essence the same tradition with that of the cyclic poet Stasin: the divinity had intervened to relieve the earth from this burden of people. Finally, "the **abandoned ploughed terrains** in the mountains", another tradition from the village Calinesci, Valcea district, tells us, are from the time when there were **too many people on earth**, and the fields on the plains were not enough for them"].

These new invaders, being unable to follow the ancient road of migration, were forced to take an entirely abnormal direction for these tribes, in search of a new and happier country. They

advanced upwards, on the banks of the Nipru (Dnepr), towards the Baltic Sea, occupied the lands of Lithuania and from there, one part extended westwards along the shores of northern Germany, while other tribes crossed to Sweden and Norway.

This is the **third**, **northern Neolithic current**, called by some French archaeologists, **hyperborean** [3].

[3. The name of **hyperborean current**, applied to the Neolithic tribes from near the Baltic Sea, does not correspond either to geographical, or to historical truth. The **Hyperboreans** (Pelasgian people), who played in prehistoric times such an important cultural role, appear in their epoch of greatness as dwelling on the northern side of the Lower Danube and in the Carpathian (Riphaei) mountains. Later on, the name of Hyperboreans, because of their ethnic homogeneity, has been applied by Greek authors to other different Pelasgian tribes, whose places of habitation have never been well defined].

The first two currents or Neolithic migrations, present in everything the same common basis for their civilizations, the same way of life and the same cult, and they belonged by their ethnic type (dolycho-cephalic), and by the elements of their idiom, to one and the same race of humans, who, in a remote prehistoric epoch, had lived in the inner regions of Asia, in a social and a religious community. On the other hand, the northern or hyperborean current, appears in the history of those primitive times, more as a series of various ethnic migrations, which had not even departed from inner Asia at the same time; a current composed in a large part by two distinct races of peoples, one dolycho-cephalic, pastoral and agricultural, from the same branch of the two preceding currents [4], the other brachy-cephalic, with a round head and a much smaller stature. The latter did not know how to be either shepherds or farmers, but were simple hunters and fishermen, and had no importance in the history of the civilization of this epoch.

[4. In the prehistoric tumuli of **east Galitia**, in those from the region of **Moscow**, from **Minsk** and from **Lithuania**, were found dolycho-cephalic craniums (while the Ruteni and Polish population of today is brachy-cephalic). These dolycho-cephalic prehistoric craniums are also found in south Germany and in Latium (**Correspondenzblatt** d.deutschen Gesellschaft f. Anthropologie Jahrgang 1876, p.63). The Neolithic dolycho-cephalic type also appears in the caves of Switzerland (**Fraipont**, Les caverns, p.176, 275). Also the craniums discovered at the Neolithic site of Lengyel, in Tolna county in Hungary, are dolycho-cephalic (**Pulszky**, Magyarorszag archaeologiaja, I. p.41).

Of all these Neolithic migrations though, **the southern current** or ***paleochton*** (Carpatho-Mycenic) has played the most important role in the history of European civilization.

The first place occupied in an enduring way by this Neolithic current, were the countries of ancient Dacia, endowed from nature with extensive and fertile plains, with valleys and magnificent woodlands, crossed by countless rivers. Here was formed the great centre of the multitude of Neolithic population, the first adoptive country for the great masses of shepherds, who came with their leaders, their tribes, their gods and their flocks from Asia towards the Danube.

We have presented in these pages the origin, progress and character of the Neolithic conquest, which populated and civilized the vast regions of Europe. So, the Neolithic epoch appears in

Europe, with the exception of the shore of the Baltic Sea, **homogenous and integrated,** from an ethnic and cultural point of view.

But, when we talk here about this extended and powerful Neolithic invasion in Europe, we don't refer at all to the anachronistic migration of the so-called "**Arii**", with whom modern philology is preoccupied, and whose hypothetical conclusions do not match either the results of the archaeological investigations, or the findings of anthropology; but on the contrary, we talk about a movement much older than the epoch of metals (or of the so-called **Arians**), a movement which had happened a lot earlier than the migration to Europe of the Greeks, the Celts and the Germans, a movement which had left real traces about its ante-Hellenic and ante-Celtic culture, in all the countries which it occupied or touched [5].

[5. The so-called "**Arii**" (the Indo-Iranians, Armenians, Latins, Greeks, Celts, Germans, Slavs and Albanians), with which are preoccupied the representatives of linguistics**, have never constituted an ethnic family**, as far as history could elucidate. Namely, it is written about the **Greeks**, that they are a later migration than that of the Pelasgians, and that they had borrowed from them the elements of prehistoric civilization. And even the Greeks themselves considered the **Pelasgians** as the oldest people on earth. Similarly, the **Celts**, and after them the **Germans**, have settled a few thousand years ago, over the vast and archaic Pelasgian substratum of central, northern and western Europe. From a historical point of view, there is no sufficient criterion that the so-called Arian languages could have derived from a single primitive language. The lexical material, and we understand here the elements with identical or analogous forms, as well as the common particularities of the grammatical organism, **do not appear as an inheritance through genetic descent**, but as a simple **borrowing** from a language much more archaic, more extended and more perfect. It is incontestable that the language, as a way of expression of thought, changes much easier and faster than **the type and faculties of the spirit**, and these two latter particularities, which separate in such a fundamental way the populations called indo-European, overthrow all the hypotheses of linguistics about their ethnic homogeneity. The fact is certain that, from the Neolithic epoch until today, any new differentiation of types had not appeared. Today they are like they were in prehistoric times. So, the theory of Arii, as presented by linguistics, can't be supported either with historical, or anthropological arguments.
The homogeneity, either somatic, or linguistic, of these populations, can't be accepted in any instance].

ADDITIONAL NOTES: (TN – somewhat shortened)

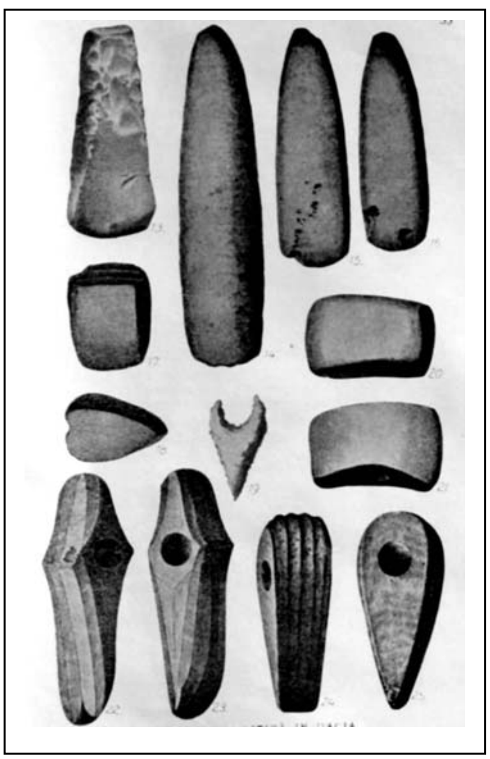
1. **The Neolithic tool industry in Dacia. The stone and bone artifacts**.
A great number of stone weapons and tools, as well as objects, manufactured from animal bones and horn, have been found in all the regions of ancient Dacia (**Romer**, Mouvement archeologique, p.9). Especially in **Transylvania** and **northern Hungary**, the Neolithic industry of stone tools appears to have been greatly developed. At the Paris prehistoric congress, 1876, writes Romer, "I was the first to present a piece of **obsidian obtained in Transylvania**. Until then, everybody thought that obsidian had been imported to Europe from Mexico, because only a few specimens brought from there, and a few from Italy, were known".
As regards the **Romanian Country**, and especially the **Vadastra** prehistoric site, **Cesar Boliac** writes "…in two days, a few men extracted from a place, on the surface of which there was nothing to betray the hidden deposits, from a depth of one, to one and an half meter, **over three thousand flint objects**, arrows, knives, axes, hammers, hatchets, perforated hammers, …about **three hundred clay objects**…and about **three hundred objects made of bone**, from which about seventy were intact … (Analele Soc.acad. X. R. p.270).
In **Bukovina**, the most significant Neolithic site is **Siret**, but there were many other discoveries made in other localities (**Kaindl**, Geschichte der Bukovina, 1896, I, p.6-10).

This industry of Neolithic man in Dacia is in large part **indigenous**. Almost the entire material from which the stone weapons and tools were made, presents a local character (flint, serpentine, obsidian, calcareous marl, sandstone, quartz schist, clay schist, jasper, porphyry, bloodstone, red marble, etc),

and was extracted from the nearest rocks of the Carpathians. We could even say that we are witnessing a first beginning of mining in Dacia.

Even without considering future discoveries, we can establish here, on the basis of the archaeological documents which we have so far, the following positive fact: **The working of stone in Dacia**, judging by the archaeological collections of the museums across the Carpathians, was flourishing in the countries of Dacia, during the Neolithic epoch. Moreover, it had a more extensive and advanced development, than it appears in Austria, Germany, France and Italy. In the countries of Dacia, we find represented both halves of the Neolithic epoch, the beginning, with weapons and tools not yet polished and perforated, and the second part, or the last, which is characterized by weapons and tools polished, perforated, with varied and perfected shapes. Also, judging by the enormous number, and the geographical distribution, of these objects, it can be ascertained that **during the Neolithic epoch, there lived in the parts of Dacia a dense and industrious population**, scattered all over the plains, valleys, hills, and even the summits of the lofty mountains. Finally, the different centers of Neolithic fabrication, discovered at certain places of Dacia, from the Danube to the sources of Tisa, prove that the manufacture of stone and bone tools and weapons in that epoch was not individual, but that in our countries an industrial manufacture had begun, and a material traffic with these artifacts, traffic which had expanded far beyond the frontiers of this country.
We reproduce here different characteristic types of the stone industry of this epoch in Dacia, as well as some similar specimens from the west of Europe and the lands of Troy.

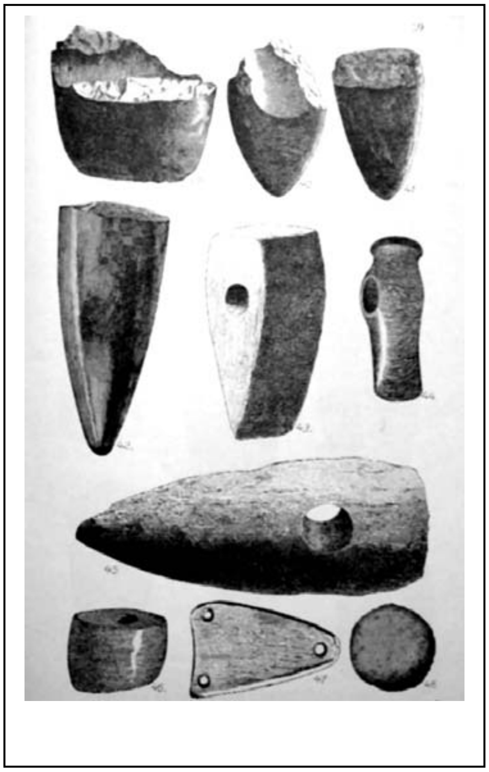
(TN – In the original text follows a list of artifacts, which then appear on four attached plates)





THE NEOLITHIC INDUSTRY IN DACIA – VARIOUS STONE TOOLS

(ROMANIA) (ROMANIA and TRANSILVANIA)

THE NEOLITHIC INDUSTRY IN DACIA – VARIOUS STONE TOOLS

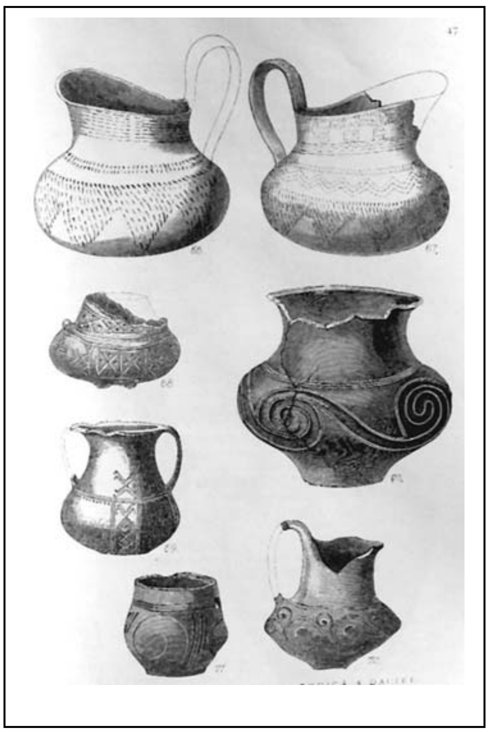
(ROMANIA, TRANSILVANIA and HUNGARY) (FRANCE, TROY and GREECE)

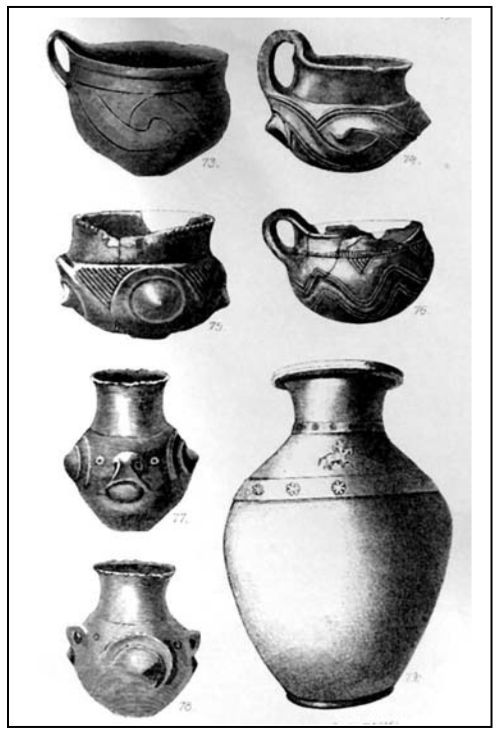
II. **Prehistoric ceramic of Dacia**.
The Neolithic ceramic is characterized by **two distinct classes**.
The first class is formed by older Neolithic pottery. In those initial Neolithic times, the ceramic was generally rough, the clay was impure, combined with grains of quartz and sand, and poorly baked. The objects are usually reddened by fire only on the surface, while the rest is grey, black or yellowish-grey. The shape of the vases, in those first Neolithic times, is more spherical or semi-spherical. They don't have a flat bottom, but they have a curved or ovoid shape underneath. Also, the vases of this class have no handles, they have only a sort of perforated ears, in order to be hung. In this class of Neolithic ceramic appear also some beginnings of ornamentation. It is formed by **straight** lines or **dotted** lines, executed less regularly and only with the nails or the fingers.

The second class of the Neolithic ceramic is characterized generally by a finer and better mixed material. The pottery presents more symmetry in shapes, a more advanced technique and a wide diversity of types. Finally, the ornamentation of this class is much more regular. It is composed more of geometrical figures formed in **straight lines**, later in **curved lines**, and executed with a stylus, or other special instruments. Everywhere though, the entire pottery of the Neolithic epoch is handmade, without a wheel or other mechanical procedure.
Even during the first times of the Bronze epoch, the ceramic of Dacia had reached a high level of perfection. The pottery of those times shows a remarkable elegance of shape, a diversity of **original** types and finally, a simple, beautiful, but traditional type of ornamentation. We find in this period a state of material well-being and an advanced civilization. The pottery of this epoch in Dacia began to show a luxurious character. It surpassed the narrow limits of a simple craft, revealing the beginnings of an art full of life. This art though suddenly ceased, before reaching its apex, as if a great economic and social upheaval had been unleashed on the territory of Dacia, and had put an end to the further development of this artistic production, at north of the Lower Danube. The geographic area of the ceramic which bears the characteristics of Dacia is much more extended. Dacia's ceramic from the Neolithic epoch, as well as that from the Bronze epoch, presents from the point of view of its artistic genus and its ethnic

character, the same typical forms and the same system of ornamentation as the clay vases from the Balkan peninsula and the islands of the Archipelagos, as the ceramic from Austria, central and southern Germany, Hanover, France, Belgium, Brittany, the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Apennines, Portugal and Sicily (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, P.263). There exists also a unity of types and ornamentation between the ceramic of Dacia and that of Troy (**Schliemann**, Ilios, p.167). Or, in other words, the entire ceramic of the Neolithic and Bronze epochs, is of the same type. It bears the characteristics of a **unity**, of the same culture and the same ethnic genius. The different motifs of the ornamentation, from the western shores of Minor Asia, to the Britannic islands, present the same unity of spirit, the same common origin. This entire **system of ornamentation is Pelasgian**, and this type of decoration is represented even today, in almost all its forms, in our domestic industry, in the weaving and embroidery practiced by the Romanian women. This ornamentation presents often certain **symbolic signs**, based on some pre-antique religious representations, like the **circle** as the sun's disk, like the sign of the **cross**, the **triangles**, or the mysterious, but favorable sign of the **swastika**, the symbol of the supreme divinity of the Pelasgians, Jupiter Tonans, representing the lightning, or the light, the life, health and wealth, sign which has been preserved until today in the sewing of the Romanian women from Transylvania. This sign is totally unknown to Assyria, Phoenicia and Egypt. It is clear that it had passed to Asia Minor from Europe (**Schliemann**, Ilios, p.526).

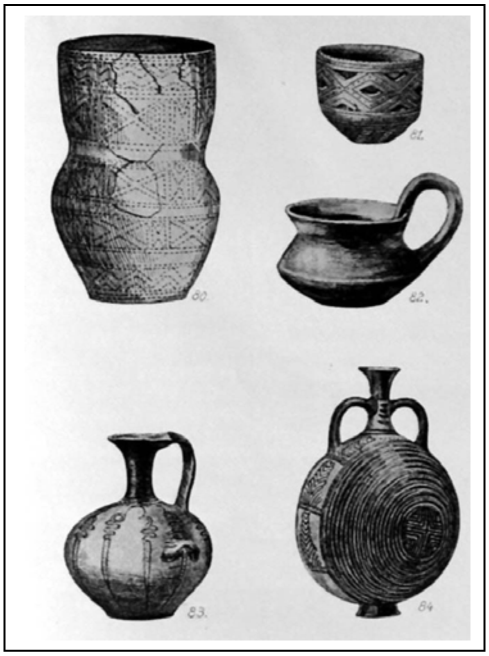
(TN – In the original text follows a list of ceramic vases, which then appear on three attached plates, with examples of prehistoric pottery from Dacia, England and Mycenae, followed by two plates showing specimens of prehistoric ornamentation from Dacia, Troy and Greece).



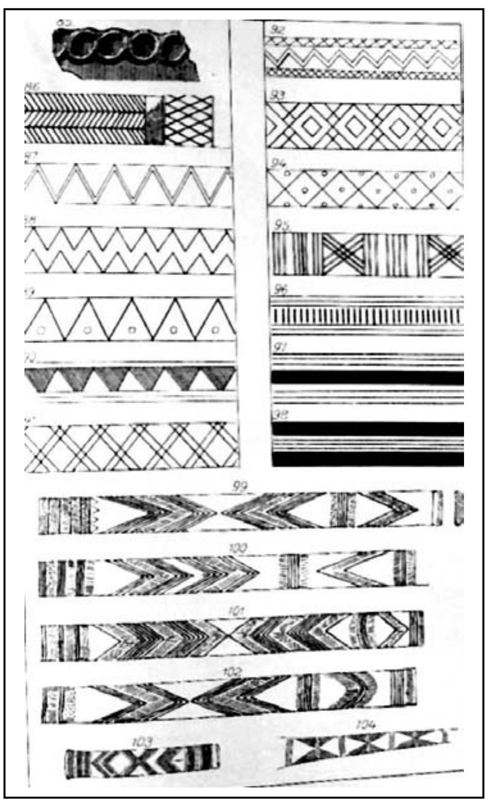


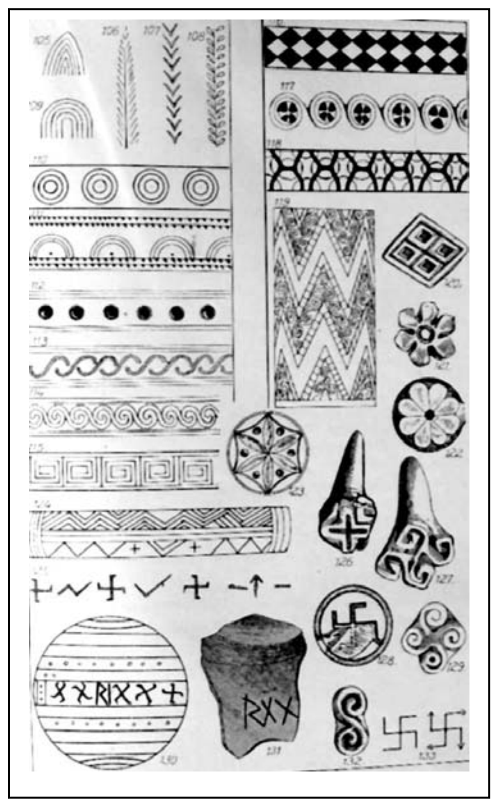
EXAMPLES OF PREHISTORIC CERAMIC OF DACIA

(TRANSILVANIA AND THE LANDS NEAR TISA) (THE LANDS NEAR TISA AND ROMANIA)



EXAMPLES OF PREHISTORIC CERAMIC
(BRITANNIC AND MYCENIAN)





SPECIMENS OF PREHISTORIC ORNAMENTATION - (DACIA, TROY and the GREEK LANDS)

Table of Contents

THE PREHISTORIC MONUMENTS OF DACIA

III. THE HEROIC PELASGIAN TUMULI [1]

[1. The funeral mounds have different names with the Romanian people: *morminte, movile, gorgane, culmi, holumpuri, silitre, popine, gruie (grunie) and gruiete*.
The word *gorgan* was used even in deep antiquity as a generic name for some hills or mountains, not only in Europe, but also in different parts of Asia.
In **Homer**'s Iliad (VIII, 48; XIV, 152), the highest peak of mount Ida, near Troy, was called **Gargaron**, and, as results from the text of this poem, all the peaks of mount Ida, including Gargaron, were not covered with trees. Another mountain in the southern parts of Italy (Apulia) had the name **Garganus** even in Roman antiquity (**Virgil**, Aeneid, XI, 247; **Horace**, Od.II.987; **Pliny**, Hist nat. III. 11.11). We also find the name *gorgan* applied in Romania and Transylvania to an infinite number of knolls, hills and mountains. In the medieval documents of Hungary, the word *gorgan* appears often with the form **Kurchan** and **Korhan** (Cod.Andegav.II.636, 1332; **Pesty**, Krasso.III.428, 1471).

From the data indicated in Homer's Iliad, as well as from the way in which this name is used by the Romanian people, the fundamental meaning of this word seems to be: a height made of earth in the shape of a dome, or in a conical shape, but of large size and not covered with trees.
The geographical zone of the word *gorgan*, having the meaning of **funeral mound** is also very extensive. In **France**, some sepulchral tumuli of the Neolithic epoch have even today the name **Kerougant**, **Kergonfals**, while a dolmen is called **Kerkonno** (**Bertrand**, La Gaule, p.124-142). In **Ireland**, the antique royal cemetery was called **Cruachan** (**Fergusson**, Les monuments megalitique, p.198-212). Even today, the word *galgal* means in French a mound of stones and earth, and it is believed that these *galgals* were antique burial mounds erected in memory of the Gaul and Roman soldiers fallen in wars (**Littre**; **Bertrand**, La Gaule, p.135).
So the origin of the word *gorgan* belongs to prehistoric times, or the Pelasgian epoch.
In Transylvania, and especially in Banat, the funeral mounds are also called *gruie* or *grunie*, name which also goes back to archaic times. On the territory of Eolia, on the shores of Asia Minor, **where once existed countless Pelasgian funeral mounds**, we find the town called **Grynium** (**Strabo**, XIII.e.5, 1,59). The same town appears with **Herodotus** (I. 149) in the plural Pelasgian form of ***Gryneia***. And **Cornelius Nepos** (Alcib.9) mentions castrum **Grunium** in Phrygia, probably identical with the town mentioned above. In **Basarabia**, the funeral mounds are also called *culmi* and in the parts of **Bihor**, across the Carpathians, *holumpuri*].

The Neolithic populations, especially the ancient Pelasgian current, people whose public and private life was based on religion, had at the same time a special cult for the deceased.
In the belief that they had not completely died, but will go on living in an eternal world, happier and more superior than the visible one, they interred the bodies of the deceased, often in natural caves or artificial ones (crypts).
Apart from this noble, religious feeling for the deceased, they had also a moral duty to ensure that they will not be forgotten on this earth. Wishing the memory of their **heroes** to be transmitted to future generations, they erected on their graves enormous earth tumuli, and on these tumuli they placed a column made of rough stone, as a holy marker.

The funeral tumuli are therefore the most ancient type of prehistoric monuments.
The inhumation in tumuli, or the erection of gigantic mounds on the graves of heroes and famous people, starts in Neolithic and continues also during the bronze age and until late in historic times.

In front of the citadel of **Troy**, the poet **Homer** tells us, there was an isolated high knoll, around which one could walk all the way, mound which the people called **Batiea**, and the immortal gods called the grave of the heroine **Murina** (Ilias. II, 811). This grand mound, which formed on the plain of Pelasgian Troy a whole hill, was, as we see, so ancient, that it had become mythical even in Homer's times. At the centre of this vast and fine plain of Troy, Homer still tells us, there was the grandiose grave of **Ilus**, **Dardanos**' son, an illustrious old man from ancient times, on which tumulus there was erected a stone column (Iliad, XXIV, 349; XI, 166, 371; X, 415). Still on this memorable plain of Troy, there was the tumulus or grave of one of the ancient Trojan leaders, old **Aesyetes**, on which tumulus had taken position during the war **Polites**, **Priam**'s son, with his men, to observe when the Greeks at the ships will try to make an offensive move against Troy (Iliad, II, 793). So this funeral mound was so gigantic, that it stood between the Schean gate and the sea as the highest observation point for the Trojans.

During the war of the Trojans with the Greeks, the old king **Priam**, as Homer tells us, laid the ashes of his son **Hector**, the first among Trojan heroes, in a gold urn, which he then covered with a purple cloth, and put it in the grave dug in the earth, after which the Trojans laid large stone slabs on it and on top of it erected a high earth tumulus (Iliad, XXIV, 798). Homer's Odyssey tells us also that the Greeks, or better said the Myrmidons, after burning the body of the hero **Achilles**, killed in the Trojan war by Paris, Priam's son, laid his bones in a gold amphora together with the urn of his friend **Patroclus**, and erected on top of them an enormous tumulus on the shores of the Hellespont, so that this grave will be seen from far out in the sea by the people who lived at that time, as well as by those who will live in the future (Odyss. XXIV, 80; Iliad, XXIII, 126). **Andromaca,** the fine wife of Hector (Iliad, VI, 418), guessing and mourning at the same time her future fate, in the event of her husband falling on the battlefield, says the following about her Pelasgian father, Etion of holy Thebes, who had been killed by Achilles.

Achilles, says she, had not taken from my father his weapons, but had burnt them together with his body, and over his ashes had erected a mound, while the mountain nymphs had planted **elm trees** around his grave [2].

[2. The custom of planting elm trees near funeral mounds had once also existed in the parts of Dacia. So, in a Romanian ballad, the hero **Toma Alimos**, feeling that his death is near, tells his horse to take him to **the grave with five elms trees**].

In Arcadia, the most ancient Pelasgian territory in the Peloponnesus, there were near the city **Orchomenos**, as **Pausanias** (Graeciae Descriptio, lib VIII, 13, 3) tells us, several mounds built of stones, tumuli that had been erected in honor of men fallen in war, but without any inscription, so that the inhabitants had no tradition with whom this war had been fought.

Near the ancient city of **Delphi**, close to the Parnassus, as Pausanias also tells us (Graeciae Descriptio, lib.X, 5,4), there could be seen even in his time the mounds of stones in which had been interred **Laios**, the legendary king of Thebes and his servant, both killed by Oedipus.

The same religious rite of erecting giant tumuli on the graves of kings and of heroes, was also continued by Pelasgian tribes after they passed on into Italy.

With our ancestors, writes **Servius** (ad. Aen. X, 849), there was the custom that the nobles be buried under **high mountains** (great mounds), or **in the heart of the mountains**. The grandiose earth grave of the ancient king **Dercenus** from Laurent, formed, as **Virgil** (Aeneid, XI, v. 849) tells us, a high mountain covered with shady oaks. On the plain between Alba and Rome, the historian **Livy** (Hist. Rom. Lib.I.25) tells us, the mounds in which had been buried the brothers **Curiates** and **Horaces** could be seen even in his time. And south of Rome, near Porta Ostiensis, the traveler sees even today the grandiose pyramid of **Cestius**, one of the most important monuments of Rome, which has been preserved whole until this day. This pyramid consists of an enormous pointed tumulus, 155 feet high, and has four faces, lined with squared slabs of white marble. But the most magnificent funeral mound of Rome was the **Mausoleum** of the emperor Augustus, who considered himself a descendant of the ancient Trojan families. This imposing grave, built in 2ad was, as **Strabo** (Geographica, V, 3.8) tells us, an enormous tumulus of earth, erected on the Field of Mars, near the bank of the Tiber. There was a vault of white stone underneath, and above it was covered with green trees to the top. On top of this funeral mound rose the bronze statue of Augustus, and under it there were laid his remains, and the remains of his relatives and of his retinue.

The principal characteristic of Pelasgian heroic tumuli was their enormous size (**Virgil**, Aeneid, lib.III, 62).

The Pelasgians appear in traditions and monuments, as people avid of glory (Iliad, VII, 86-91). Their ambition was to have **colossal graves** and their memory to be celebrated in **songs**, for the benefit of future generations (Iliad, VI, 358). To know that after death your people sing you praises, was the greatest happiness for a hero of the Pelasgian epoch (Odyssey, V, 311).

In Pelasgian tumuli the bodies of famous heroes were laid in gold urns and near them were deposited their weapons and a great many other precious gifts, real **treasures**.

The Pelasgians are the wealthiest people of the ancient world (Iliad, V, 710). They have enormous quantities of gold and copper (Iliad, II, 230) and at the same time they have countless flocks of sheep (Iliad, II, 605,705; IV, 476), herds of giant oxen (Iliad, I, 154; V, 313), magnificent horses (Iliad, II, 230; III, 130). The Pelasgians can ransom a war prisoner at any price, no matter how high (liad, I, 372). The city **Mycenae** of the Pelasgians of the Peloponnesus is the richest city in gold (Iliad, VII, 180). **Pelasgian Troy** was in the eyes of everybody, rich in gold and copper (Iliad, XVIII, 289; X, 315) and the Greeks hoped that after its conquest they will return home with all their ships full of gold and copper (Iliad, IX, 137). **Dardanos**, the patriarch of the Trojans and Romans, was, according to legends, the richest man among all the mortals of his world (Iliad, XX, 220). In the ruins of Pelasgian citadels and graves, the archaeologists find today the most

precious vases and ornaments of gold and silver, which arouse in us astonishment at the opulence of this people. Another particular characteristic of the **ancient Pelasgian tumuli** was that they had to be made of earth (Iliad, VI, 464), a rite which as we see, was tightly connected to their old religious belief that the progenitors of the Pelasgian race were born straight from the earth. On top of Pelasgian funeral mounds is usually erected a stone column (stele). This, says Homer, is **the honor of the dead** (Iliad, XI, 371; XVI, 457, 674).

The same custom of honoring the memory of the deceased heroes with enormous earth tumuli had also existed in a remote epoch in the countries of ancient Dacia. Almost in every district of Romania there are one or several funeral mounds, of colossal dimensions, which bear the name "Movila mare" or "Magura mare" (TN – the big Mound or the big Knoll) [3].

[3. One of the most gigantic funeral mounds and the most ancient at the same time is the artificial mound called "**Rabaia**" on the territory of the village Rasesci, in Falciu district, situated on the right bank of the river Prut (**Dimitrie Cantemir**, Descriptio Moldaviae, PI, c,4). This mound, 18-23m high, is said, according to other traditions, to have been made during the time of "**Poedia**", the multitude of people, and to be the grave either of a king's daughter, or of a heroine fallen on that plain". Herodotus also speaks about an archaic mound near the river Nistru. **Grigore Urechia** also mentions a large mound near the river Siret "And there, above **Siret, at the large mound of Tecuci**, Stephen the Great rested"].

These mounds, situated by Pelasgian custom on plains, along roads or on top of hills, can be generally seen from great distances, exactly as they were in Trojan times, with the purpose to be seen from far away, by either the people who lived then, or those who will live in the future.

Most of these grandiose mounds of our countries have contained, according to traditions of the Romanian people, precious treasures. Some of them still bear the names "Movila comoarei" or "Movila sapata" (TN – the Mount of the treasure, or the dug-out Mound).

Today though, this multitude of funeral mounds from our countries, are only silent monuments of some remote times [4].

[4. **Romania** is one of the richest countries in funeral tumuli. **Cesar Bolliac** (Trompeta Carpatilor, Nr.846, 1870) writes that this country is full of bigger or smaller mounds, from the banks of the Danube to the top of the Carpathians, and they can be counted in **tens, hundreds and thousands**, and all contain bones of one or more people. The archaeologist **Romer** of Hungary also says: if there is a country rich in such monuments (tumuli), this certainly it should be **Hungary** (Movement archeologique, p.104). It is indisputable that not all tumuli of our countries belong to the same epoch. As in all the countries of Europe, some of our funeral mounds belong without doubt to the Stone Age, while others to later times, prehistoric or historic. So, **C. Bolliac** (Trompeta Carpatilor, Nr.939) tells us that in two mounds which he had dug, he had found the corpse sitting with its spine vertical, which characterizes the Neolithic epoch. There are also Neolithic tumuli in **Bukovina** at the village Horodnicul-de–jos (**Kaindl**, Geschichte der Bukowina, I, 1896, p.5). We can say generally that those funeral mounds characterized by their considerable dimensions, by their conical shape, by their placement in lines more or less straight along the roads, belong to prehistoric times. In these prehistoric tumuli, the bones or the urn with the ashes of the deceased are often laid in a coffin made of rough stone slabs (usually four), which is covered by another slab, as a lid. Apart from the urn with ashes, there are found also in these cysts pieces of flint or marble, shaped as a chisel, and shards of rough pottery. We are told about such burials found at the village Borlesci in Neamtu district and the village Satanga in Dambovita district (Romer). In **Transylvania**, funeral tumuli are to be found in different regions, but they appear in a considerable number in counties near the river Tisa, Ung, Zabolti, Bereg, Bihor, Beches, Ciongrad, Cenode, Heves, Arad and Timisoara (**Romer**, Mouvement archaeologique, p.150). To these mounds near Tisa refers a fragment of a folk heroic song from Transylvania. In **Basarabia**, the number of

funeral mounds is also considerable and we find in our heroic poetry a memory, certainly very old, about these tumuli.

Regarding the tumuli of **southern Russia**, **Ouvaroff** (Recherches sur les antiquites de la Russie meridionale, Paris, 1855, p. 6, 7, 37) writes: “in the southern parts, on the shores of the Black Sea, the tumuli had…a lot to suffer from the cupidity of the foreigners. The Genovese and the Venetians have dug in Crimea many a tumulus, and have appropriated the treasures which they have discovered. It is said that most of the tumuli of Russia go back to the Scythes and the Greeks…The tumuli are to be found in abundance in the vicinity of the principal towns of ancient Russia…Almost all of them are made of **rectangular stones, formed of great calcareous slabs.**

In **Bulgaria**, **Kanitz** (Donau-Bulgarien, I, p.62, 149) tells us, there are tumuli on both sides of the Balkans, especially in the valleys of the rivers **Osma**, **Iantra** and **Tundza**. Especially memorable are the tumuli placed at regular intervals on the bank of the Danube, between **Sistov** and **Nicopol**. From Rusciuk to Samovoda, in the pass of Iantra, Kanitz had counted about 40 tumuli on both sides of the road. And about the tumuli of Macedonia and Thessaly we find the following notes with **Boue** (La Turquie d’Europe, II, p.352): There are mounds in **southern Macedonia**, especially near ancient Pella and Salonique…It could be said that these mounds were aligned along a road, and not placed without symmetry, like those of Sophia and Philipppopoli. **These Macedonian mounds are of the greatest dimensions** and resemble at the same time those of **Troy**…Close to **Larissa** in **Thessaly** there is a good number of tumuli…there are also near **Armyros** and **Velestina**… in **Beotia** and close to **Tyrinth**, in **Morea**.

By examining the geographical distribution and direction of the funeral mounds in the eastern parts of Dacia, we ascertain the positive fact that **the principal line of these prehistoric monuments**, stretched from southern Russia towards Dacia, across Basarabia, Moldova, Valahia, across the eastern part of the Balkan peninsula, as well as across the western shores of Asia Minor; while **another smaller branch** of this line of tumuli departs from the Nistru and crosses towards Bukovina and east Galitia (Cf. Archiv. D. Vereines fur siebenburgische Landeskunde N.F. XIV. 150)].

We know neither the name of the heroes whose ashes or bones were laid in these archaic graves, nor the events to which they participated. These tumuli tell us only that most of them belong to the Pelasgian funerary and honoring ceremonies for the dead, and that these lands were once, in a remote time, the country of the Pelasgian people, who alone distinguished themselves by this type of monuments. Even today, some of these imposing earth monuments of our countries bear the ethnic name of the **Tursani** or Pelasgians, while others are considered, according to the different ideas and traditions of the local inhabitants, as **graves of giants**, meaning a powerful race of men who supposedly have dwelt in these countries (especially in the districts Roman, Neamtu and Dorohoi) in prehistoric times [5].

[5. A mound on the territory of the village Marotinul-de-jos, in Romanati district, is called Grindul **Tursanului** (An. Soc. Acad. Tom X, Sect. II, p.333). Another one on the territory of the village Balteni in Valcea district, where are found shards of clay vases of ancient manufacture, is called **Turtsan** (Densusianu’s “Historic questionnaire”). In the county Solnoc-Dobaca across the Carpathians, the folk tradition is that **the stone implements were left by the giants** (Archaeologiai Ertesito. Uj foly. XV.p388)].

The **Pelasgians** were the people to whom the traditions and the poets have attributed the name of **giants** even during Greek antiquity. The gigantic tumuli and the titanic constructions of enormous blocks of stone belong to them.

Achilles, one of the dukes of the Pelasgians from the northern parts of Greece, is called by Homer a **giant** (***pelorios***). His spear was so big that no Achaean could vibrate. **Hector**, the Trojan Pelasgian hero, also bears the epithet ***pelorios***. **Aeneas**, the duke of the Dardans, in his

fight with Achilles, catches and lifts with his hand a stone rock which two men could not carry. **Mars**, the Pelasgian god, protector of the Trojans, and whose residence was in the countries from the Lower Danube, has with Homer the name giant (***pelorios***). When this god of the northern countries clamors, his voice sounds like the voice of ten thousand men at war, and when he falls to the earth, hit with a stone by the goddess Athena, his body covers 100 fathoms [6].

[6. Iliad XIX, 388; XI, 819; XX,286; VII,208; V,859; XXI,407. According to the traditions of the Arcadians, **Pelasg**, the legendary patriarch of the Pelasgian people, surpassed all other men with his **size**, **force**, physical and spiritual beauty (Pausanias lib.VIII.1.4.].

Although even the traditions about the great mounds of Dacia have mostly disappeared, like they did about the heroic tumuli from Troy, these archaic graves in our countries had once a particular religious history. Even in Homer's and Hesiodus' epoch, had been preserved in Greek lands various legends, about the happy country of the Pelasgians from north of Thrace, or the Lower Danube, where lived the most righteous men and where they led quiet and content lives. The various Pelasgian tribes, which, during several hundreds of years, had left the valleys of the Carpathians and had spread over the less fertile regions of Greece and Asia Minor, have kept even until late the memory of their forefathers from the north of the Lower Danube, and at the same time the memory of that country, which was characterized by an exuberant fertility and other diverse natural riches, and where the mores and feelings of justice of the people had become legendary. Here originated the old glory of the southern Pelasgian families. Here were the sacred graves of their ancestors.

Here were those beautiful and happy places called ***'Elysion pedion*** (the Elysian plain), where the heroes of the ancient world retired in their old age and where the favorites of the gods lived a golden age and an eternal life.

Proteus says to **Menelaos** in the Odyssey (IV.v.561-568): "As for you, o, divine Menelaos, your fate is that **you will not die in Argos**, but the immortal gods will send you to **the plain of Elysium**, **at the ends of the earth, where people lead a very easy life**, where there is neither snow, nor hard winters, nor big rains and where the zephyrs murmur continuously and revive the people. **Hesiodus** also, in his epic poem Opera et Dies (v.159-173), mentions as a last echo of former times, **the divine generation of heroes** of ancient times, scattered on the whole immense surface of the globe, some of whom had perished in the war of Thebes, while the others had fallen at Troy, far away, across the sea, because of Helen. To these, says he, Jove, Saturn's son, destined dwellings **in the blessed islands** from the ends of the earth, where they led a life without worries, where the earth blossoms and produces sweet fruit three times a year.

The ancients never doubted the real terrestrial existence of the plain called Elysius.

Hesiodus, exactly like Homer, also knew this happy, inhabited land, but he considered it to have been only in the islands called the "blessed ones" – Makaron – **situated at the Lower Danube** (**Aviennus**, Descriptio orbis terrae, v.723; Pliny/ IV.27.1).

But which were **the ends of the earth**, spoken about by Homer and Hesiodus?

They were the ends of the Greek geographical horizon, as we will have many occasions to convince ourselves during the course of this book. Even during the Homeric and Hesiodic epoch, the territorial knowledge of the Greek authors stops at the north of Thrace. Homer knows only two ethnic groups at the north of Mysia or in our countries, with very pure customs, the **Agavi** and the **Abii**, **the most just people among all the mortals**, as he says in the Iliad (XIII.5.6.).

Even in **Herodotus**' times, the **geographical darkness** starts immediately northwards from the Lower Danube. "**What kind of people dwell north of Thrace**", says this author, "**nobody can say for sure**. But is seems that beyond the Istru there is a deserted and infinite country…The inhabitants of Thrace also say that the lands from beyond the Ister are occupied by bees, and that because of them the people can not go any further" (lib.V.c.).

A country occupied by bees? [6]

[6. This historical tradition of Herodotus has a real basis. Even until two hundred years ago, one of the most important export article of the Romanian countries, to the Egyptians, Venetians and Ragusans, was the **bees wax** (**Cantemir** – Moldaviae Descriptio. Ed.1872 p.22, p.33). Cantemir, speaking at the same time about the extensive apiculture of Moldova, adds that the inhabitants of this country could have profited more from this branch of the economy, as in his time the fields were full of the finest flowers, and on another hand the forests also offered an abundant material for wax and honey, but it had been decreed by the laws of the country, that no one should possess more beehives, than his land could support, otherwise, by having too many beehives, one could upset one's neighbors. Apart from the normal honeycombs, the author tells us, the Moldavian bees produced also a sort of blackish wax, but with a very pleasant smell, which they used only to prevent the light from entering into the hive.

The Ragusan **Raicevich** also wrote in the past century that one of the most precious and plentiful industry of the Romanian provinces was apiculture (Osservazioni, 1788 p.87).

To complete these data we add that several islands of the Danube, as well as villages, hamlets, isolated sites, hills, peaks, tops of mountains and valleys from the territory of Romania, bear even today the names of **Albina** (TN – bee), **Albinari**, **Prisaca** (TN – apiary), **Prisacani**, **Prisaceni**, **Stupi** (TN – beehive), **Stuparia**, **Stupina**, **Stupine, Stiubeiu** and **Stiubeieni**, traces of an extended apiculture of our countries in ancient times (the Great Dictionary of Romania; **Frundzescu**, Topographical and statistical dictionary of Romania). In Itinerarium Antonini Augusti (Ed.Parthey et Pinder p.104) it is also mentioned a locality called **Appiaria** (or Stupini), situated eastwards of Transmarisca on the right bank of the Danube. And we note finally that two of the districts of Romania, Mehedinti and Vaslui, have even today the image of the bee in their district coats of arms].

Which is in total accord actually with the Hesiodic tradition, of the place where the earth blossoms and produces fruit three times a year. The fertility truly prodigious of the Romanian countries was legendary until our days (**Cantemir**, Descriptio Moldaviae p.27-28; **George de** Reicherstorf, Moldaviae Horographia, Viennae 1541).

Here were the ends of the earth, or better said of **the known world of Homer**, here were the happy lands and the just people of the Greek legends. Here was the holy burial place of the ante-Homeric Pelasgian heroes. Here, finally, according to the old Pelasgo-Graeco traditions, had been brought and buried the ashes of **Achilles**, **Patroclus**, the two **Ajax** and **Antilochus** (**Pausanias**, lib.III.19.13), for that the souls of these heroes could enjoy here an eternal happiness.

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IV. ACHILLES' TUMULUS OR BURIAL MOUND IN THE ALBA (TN - White) ISLAND (LEUCE)

(Today "the **Serpents' Island**", in the Black Sea, near the mouths of the Danube, in front of the arm of **Chilia** and at a distance of 41.06km from its mouth).

One of the most famous prehistoric tumuli, which **Arctinos**, the most important cyclic poet, as well as the Roman geographers, attribute to our countries, is "**the burial mound of Achilles**", the foremost hero of the Iliad.

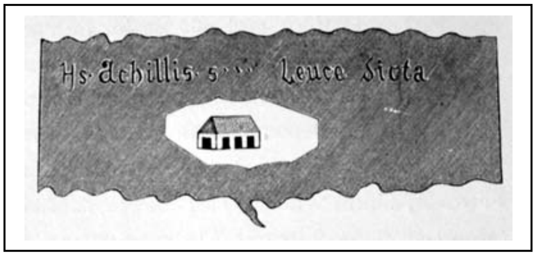
According to **Homer**, the bard of the Trojan War, Achilles was the son of **Peleus** and the sea goddess Thetis, Nereus' daughter. Peleus, Achilles' father, appears as lord over the Pelasgian people of the Myrmidons, and Achilles is lord of the courageous Myrmidon soldiers and other neighboring Pelasgian tribes, which take part in the heroic war against the Trojans, as allies of the Greeks (Iliad, II, 681; XVI, 168).

The Iliad doesn't mention anything about the circumstances of Achilles' death. But in the Odyssey (XXIV, 36) it is told that he fell at Troy, that his body was dressed in divine cloth and burnt on the pyre, that his bones were placed in a golden urn, together with those of Patroclus, and that the Greeks raised on top of everything, on the shore of the Hellespont, a large, high tumulus, such as to be seen from far away out in the sea, by the people who lived at that time, as well as those who shall live in the future. So, according to Homer, Achilles was buried on Troy's plain, not far from the shore of the Hellespont.

But in the poem **Aetiopida**, written by **Arctinos**, epic poet from Miletus, who had continued and completed the Iliad, we are told that Achilles was killed at Troy by Paris, Priam's son, helped by the god Apollo, and that, after a lot of fierce fighting, Ajax and Odysseus managed to steal his body from the hands of the Trojan enemies, and bring it to the Greek ships. Once here, Achilles' mother Thetis came with her sisters and the muses, wailed and mourned him, then removed her son's ashes from the pyre and took them to **Leuce** (Alba, TN - White) **island**, or the Serpents' Island, at the mouths of the Danube. And the Achaeans raised a tumulus for him and celebrated funereal games (**Homeri**, Carmina et cycli epici reliquiae, Ed. Didot, p.583).

So, there existed in classical antiquity two versions about the place where the bones of the great prehistoric hero had been deposited; one told by Homer's Odyssey, that Achilles was buried in Troy's plain and another tradition, amended, represented by the oldest cyclic poet, that Achilles fell at Troy, but his ashes were taken and buried in Leuce island. This last opinion was adopted and supported by the most competent Roman authors.

Pliny the Old, whom Varro names the most erudite man the Romans ever had, tells us very clearly that **the tumulus**, **or Achilles' burial mound is in the island which is consecrated to him, called "the Achillis island" or "Achillea", located at a distance of 50 Roman miles away from the Danube Delta (Peuce)** and that a temple consecrated to this hero was also built there (Hist. Nat. IV, 27.1).



Thr island and temple of Achilles.
After Tabula Peutingeriana.
Segm. IX. 3.
(La Miller, Weltkarte des Castorius)

Similarly, the Roman geographer **Mela**, who had used the best sources of the antiquity, tells us that **Achilles is buried in the island named Achillea**, between Boristene and Ister (De situ orbis, II, 7). And the Greek geographer **Dionysius Periegetus** from Bithynia, who lived in the times of the emperor Domitian, writes the following: "Above the left side of the Euxine Pontos, in front of **Borystene** (read here the arm of the Danube called **Boreostoma**) there is in the sea **a very renowned island, consecrated to heroes**, island which is called **Leuce**, because the wild animals which live there are white (**albe**). It is said that there, in Leuce island, reside **the souls of Achilles and other heroes**, and that they wander through the uninhabited valleys of this island; this is how Jove rewarded the men who had distinguished themselves through their virtues, because through virtue they had acquired everlasting honor" (Orbis description, v. 541).

Pausanias also tells us "there is in the Euxine Pontos, **near the mouths of the Ister**, an island consecrated to **Achilles**, covered with forests and full of animals, some wild, some tame. In this island there is also Achilles' **temple** and his **statue**" (III, 19, 11).

And **Arrian of Nicomedia**, the most distinguished of the chroniclers of Alexander the Great's expeditions, gives us the following details about the island of Achilles: "Close to the mouth of the Istru named **Psilum**, if one navigated with the north wind, there is an island in the open waters of the sea, which some call **the island of Achilles** ***('Achilleos nesos)***, others **Achilles' road** ***(Dromos Achilleos)***, and others still, because of its color, ***Leuce*** = the white (**alba**) island. It is said that the goddess Thetis raised this island from the sea, for her son Achilles, who dwells there. Here is his **temple** and his **statue**, an archaic work. This island is not inhabited and goats graze on it, not many, which the people who happen to arrive here with their ships, sacrifice to Achilles. In this temple are also deposited a great many holy gifts, craters, rings and precious stones, offered to Achilles in gratitude. One can still read inscriptions in Greek and Latin, in which Achilles is praised and celebrated. Some of these are worded in Patroclus' honor, because those who wish to be favored by Achilles, honor Patroclus at the same time. There are also in this island countless numbers of sea birds, which look after Achilles' temple. Every morning they fly out to sea, wet their wings with water, and return quickly to the temple and sprinkle it. And after they finish the sprinkling, they clean the hearth of the temple with their wings. Other people say still more, that some of the men who reach this island, come here intentionally. They bring animals in their ships, destined to be sacrificed. Some of these animals they slaughter, others

they set free on the island, in Achilles' honor. But there are others, who are forced to come to this island by sea storms. As they have no sacrificial animals, but wish to get them from the god of the island himself, they consult Achilles' oracle. They ask permission to slaughter the victims chosen from among the animals that graze freely on the island, and to deposit in exchange the price which they consider fair. But in case the oracle denies them permission, because there is an oracle here, they add something to the price offered, and if the oracle refuses again, they add something more, until at last, the oracle agrees that the price is sufficient. And then the victim doesn't run away any more, but waits willingly to be caught. So, there is a great quantity of silver there, consecrated to the hero, as price for the sacrificial victims. To some of the people who come to this island, Achilles appears in dreams, to others he would appear even during their navigation, if they were not too far away, and would instruct them as to which part of the island they would better anchor their ships" (Periplus, Ponti euxini, 32, 33).

The heroic cult of Achilles in Leuce island was widespread in Graeco – Roman antiquity, not only in the big commercial centers of the Black Sea, but even in different ports and maritime cities of the Archipelagos and the Adriatic Sea, whose economic interests were tightly connected to the riches of the Black Sea.

Achilles from Leuce island was especially venerated, until late in the Roman epoch, as the **Lord and master of the Black Sea**, ***Pontarches***, and as the main protector of the navigation in those parts – epithet, the sense of which seems at first examination mysterious, from a historical point of view, but the origin of which harks back to the times when Achilles had the title of **King of Scythia** even during his life (**Kohler**, Memoire, p.578, 634-643; **Ouvaroff**, recherches sur les antiquites de la Russie meridionale, II. p.46; **Lykophron** apud Kohler, Ibid. p.552).

The sailors of the Black Sea made detours to Leuce island, some of them in order to place, willingly or not, on the altar of him, who bore the title Pont-arch or sovereign of the Euxine Pontos, their due, as custom duty; others in order to escape the terrible storms and the black mists of this vast and deep sea; and still others, in order to pray to god Achilles for their happy return from the waters of this inhospitable sea.

To Achilles from Leuce island were dedicated a number of important commercial centers of the Greek waters, like the ports named **Achilleion** in Mesenia (**Stephanus Byzanthinus**), **Achilleios** in Laconia (**Pausanias**, lib. III, 25,4) and another town in Baeotia (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie). Similarly, an important commercial centre, placed in prehistoric antiquity under the special protection of Achilles, seems to have been the town **Old – Chilia**, near the north arm of the Danube Delta, which is called even today the arm of Chilia (or Achileii). Even the name ***Psilon stoma*** given to this arm in Alexander the Great's epoch (**Arrianus**, Periplus Ponti euxini, c.31, 3, 5), seems to be only a Greek phonetic alteration of the popular ancient form **Chilleion stoma**, or **the mouth of (A)Chiliei**. And finally, even the name **Lykostomum**, under which the

name Chilia appears during the Middle Ages, has a much older origin. From a historic and geographic point of view, Lykostomum is nothing else but ***leuchon stoma***, the mouth near the white (alba) island or **Leuce**.

Chilia was the most important commercial point at the mouths of the Danube even as late as 200 years ago. Prince **Dimitrie Cantemir** writes about this: Chilia, the principal city of the district of Chilia, is a renowned town, called at, not only by ships of the neighboring maritime ports, but by ships of other lands, more distant, from Egypt, Venice and Ragusa, which deal with importing from here wax and raw hides of oxen (Descriptio Moldaviae, p. 21) [1].

> [1. In older times, the sand and mud deposits at the mouths of the Danube being not so extensive, **Old Chilia** (TN – Chilia Veche) was almost a seaport (see the map of **Vignola** from 1686, "Moldavia et Valachia", and the map "Danubii pars infima" of **Homannus** (d.1724), reproduced in Analele Acad. Rom. S, II, T, H, Memories; also "Tabula geographica Moldaviae" of Prince **Cantemir**, in Descriptio Moldaviae.
> In ancient Greek geography, another topical name appears at the mouths of the Danube, ***'Achilleios plaxi***. **Hesychius** believes that it refers to Achilles' island, Leuce (**Kohler**, Ibid. p.543, 729). But the meaning of the word *plaxi* (= plain, surface) cannot be applied to a small and convex island, like Leuce, so this name probably refers to the **arm** of Chilia. Another port on the Danube, dedicated to Achilles, seems to have been **Celeiul**, from the county of Romanati, once an important commercial centre, where ruins and a lot of Roman relics can be still found today. A stone bridge across the Danube (built by **Constantine the Great**) had existed there, bridge, the ruined pillars of which can still be seen when the water recedes, and from this bridge a Roman stone paved road led towards Transylvania. Even an island in the Danube, located downstream from this place, in front of the village Dasova, bears the name of **Celeiu**. And an island named Achillea also exists near the shore of Asia Minor (Pliny, Hist. nat. V, 37,1)].

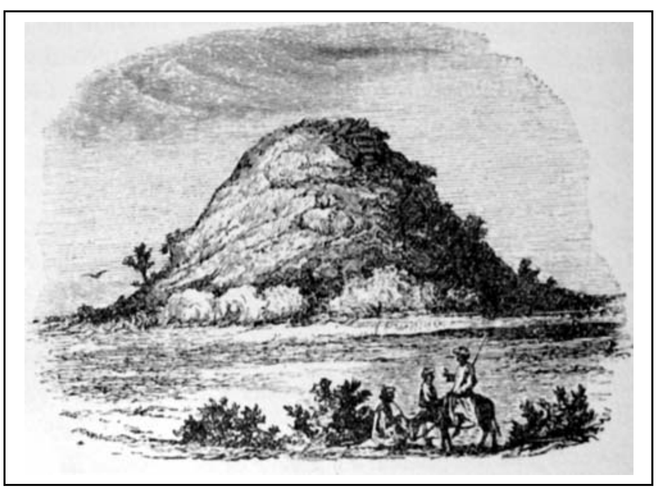
This is the first prehistoric epoch in the history of the commerce, always lively, on the Black Sea, epoch in which **Leuce island appears to have sovereign rights over Pontos**, dominates the navigation and traffic of produce across this sea, and at the same time extends its influence to the principal ports of the Archipelagos [2].

> [2. Even **Aquileia**, important port of the Adriatic Sea, seems, by its name, to have been once consecrated to Achilles. This would prove that the commercial ties between the Adriatic and the Black Sea had started way back in the prehistoric epoch, that even before the settling of the Genovese, Venetians and Ragusans on the shores of the Black Sea, the merchants of Aquileia were protected by the Pontarch from Leuce Island].

Apart from its holy image, Leuce Island from the mouths of the Danube, was at the same time renowned in antiquity as an island of **healing**. Here, according to an old tradition of the oracles, those who had been gravely wounded in wars nurtured back their health. So, Leonym, the lord of the Crotoniens from Brutius, who had received, during a fight with the Locriens, a chest wound of which he suffered greatly, consulted firstly the oracle of Delphi, regarding his health, but the prophetess (Pythia) sent him to Leuce Island, at the mouths of the Danube, from where he then returned healed (**Pausanias**, lib.III.19,13). **Ammianus Marcellinus** (lib. XXII, c.8) also tells us that in Leuce Island there were healing waters (aquae).

From all this, and especially from Arctinos' account, from the precise information transmitted by Pliny and Mela, and finally, from the sacred cult of Achilles in Leuce Island, results in a wholly convincing way, that the ashes of this great hero of the Trojan times were brought to and laid in Leuce Island. His tumulus or burial mound was known here until later times. "**Insula Achillis tumulo eius viri clara**", says **Pliny**, and **Mela** repeats "**ibi Achilles situs est**".

But as to his grave on the shore of the Hellespont, about which speaks Homer, it seems that it was only a simple cenotaph, or a commemorative monument. Such a symbolic grave of Achilles also existed, according to **Pausanias**, in the city Elis in the Peloponnesus, having been built and dedicated to him as ordered by the oracle (lib. VI, 23, 3). The words of the geographer **Strabo** are significant regarding this, because he mentions at Achilleion, on Troy's territory, only **the monument** of Achilles, but avoids to affirm that Achilles had been buried there (XIII,1,32,39,46). **Schliemann**, the active explorer of Homeric antiquity, had tried to find the ruins of Achilles' grave on the shores of the Hellespont. He writes "at a distance of 250 feet from Hellespont, at the feet of Sigeu promontory, on the spot where old Achileum existed, there is an earth tumulus, 4m high to the south, and 12m to the north, which has been considered from a deep antiquity as being Achilles' grave. In 1882 I explored this tumulus, but I did not find any trace of bones, ashes or coals" (Ilios, p.862). So, Schliemann thinks that this tumulus, presumed to be of Achilles, exactly like that of Patroclus, and like six other funeral mounds, which he had explored, were only simple **cenotaphs**, a sort of monuments, which in the ante-Homeric antiquity were in general use. (There exists even today with the Romanian people a whole cycle of folk ballads, in which the deeds of this distinguished hero of the Iliad are sung. About the Romanian traditions of Achilles, and especially of his country and nationality, we shall talk in the last part of the history of the Pelasgians, regarding the memorable event known under the name of the Trojan War).



THE SUPPOSED CENOTAPH OF ACHILLES, NEAR THE HELLESPONT
(SCHLIEMANN, Ilios p.855)

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V. THE TEMPLE OF THE HYPERBOREANS IN LEUCE ISLAND (ALBA)

1. Hecateus Abderita about the island and temple of Apollo, in the land of the Hyperboreans.

The tumulus of Achilles in Leuce (Alba) Island, prompts us also to pay attention to the antiquity of its temple. In a very remote prehistoric epoch, **a magnificent temple** existed in the eastern parts of Dacia, the renown and influence of which had reached far, to the south-eastern lands of Europe, and the memory and holiness of which is celebrated even today in Romanian religious carols. Several authors of the antiquity wrote about this temple, which appears to us like one of the great and holy marvels of the prehistoric world, and among these was the historic **Hecateus Abderita**, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great.
We will reproduce here these precious accounts of Hecateus, taken from the few fragments which have survived in the writings of Diodorus Siculus and Claudius Aelianus.

Diodorus Siculus (lib. II, 47 – Fragmenta Hist. graec. Ed. Didot. II, p.386) writes:
"Now, after we have described the northern parts of Asia, we believe it is of interest to also mention here what is being told about the **Hyperboreans**. Among the writers of antiquity, **Hecateus** (Abderita) and others, tell that, facing the land of the Celts in the parts of the Ocean, there is an island, which is not smaller than Sicily, situated in the northern region and inhabited by the **Hyperboreans**, so named because they are more distant than the wind Boreas. Here **the soil is very good and fertile**, the temperate climate excellent, and because of this, the fruits are produced here twice a year (cf. p.68-69). It is said that Latona, (***Leto***), Apollo's mother, **was born here**, and that's why **Apollo is venerated here more than the other gods**; and because the Hyperboreans of this island celebrate this god every day, continuously singing his praises and giving him the greatest honors, it is said that these men are like a sort of priests of Apollo.
There is also in this island (Hecateus uses here a form of expression by which he gives a vague indication of location, meaning, **in the parts of the Ocean, in the parts of the island, or in its vicinity**) **a magnificent holy grove of Apollo**, of a considerable size, and **a renowned temple**, the exterior shape of which is spherical, and which temple is decorated with many offerings (cf.p.72-73).
This god, Apollo, also has a holy city of his own, and the people who dwell in this city are mostly cither players (the shape of this instrument resembles exactly the Romanian "cobza" of today), who, during the divine service, play in unison the cithers, and sing hymns, honoring and praising the God's deeds. The Hyperboreans have a distinctive way of talking (***dialectos***) and show a very familiar friendship to the Greeks, especially to the **Athenians** and the inhabitants of **Delos** (the old inhabitants of Athens and Delos were Pelasgians); this goodwill of theirs had been established and confirmed since the oldest of times. It is even said that some of the Greeks went to the Hyperboreans and left there very precious gifts, inscribed with

Greek letters; and that, similarly, **Abaris** came from there to Greece, and renewed the old friendship and **kinship** with the Delians.
It is also said that from this island, the whole of Selina (***Selene***) can be seen at a short distance from earth, and that some heights can be seen also in it. It is also said that god Apollo comes to this island every 19 years, during which time the constellations make their periodic cycle on the sky. During the time of the God's apparition in their island, beginning with the spring equinox, until the rising of the Pleiades in the first half of the month of May, the Hyperboreans play the cithers at night and dance in circles (hora), enjoying these beautiful days. The mastery of the city and the supreme administration of the temple belong to the **Boreazi**, who are descendants of **Boreas**, and they rule successively, by right".
We showed so far the fragment of Hecateus Abderita, transmitted by Diodorus Siculus.

On the other hand, the sophist **Claudius Aelianus**, who lived at the time of the emperor Adrian, transmits another fragment from Hecateus' writings, regarding this important temple of the prehistory: "Not only the poets", says Aelianus, "but also other writers, celebrate the **Hyperborean** people and the honors they bring to **Apollo**. Among others, Hecateus Abderita, but not the one from Miletus, relates that **Apollo's priests are the sons of Boreas and Chiona**, three brothers in all, six ells tall. When they hold, at the usual time, the solemn divine service, or prayer, countless flocks of swans fly there from the mountains which they name **Ripae**, and these swans, after flying firstly around the temple, like they wished to purify it, descend to the court of the temple, which is very spacious and beautiful. During the divine service, while the temple singers intone praises to god Apollo, in a sort of melodies specific to them, and while the cither players accompany in unison the harmonious melody of the singers, from outside the temple, the swans join in their singing, gaggling together; and it must be noted that these swans make no mistake, like emitting dissonant or unpleasant sounds, but follow the tone and the start given by the master of the choir, and sing together with the singers, who are most accustomed with the holy hymns. After the hymn ends, this birds' choir withdraws, looking like they have come here with only the special purpose of celebrating the god, of listening all day to the honors done to the gods, of singing together and delighting others at the same time".
These are the precious fragments preserved from the writings of Hecateus, about the magnificent temple of Apollo from the land of the Hyperboreans.

The Hyperboreans' cult of Apollo represents the golden epoch of the ante-Greek Pelasgian civilization. With the beginning of the Pelasgian migrations from the Carpathian Mountains towards south, this cult spreads over ancient Greece, over the islands of the Archipelagos and the shores of Asia Minor. We will examine here, from a historic and geographic point of view, the details preserved in Hecateus' writings about the Hyperboreans.
A new, important chapter in the history of the old Pelasgian world opens in front of us.

2. Leto and Apollo. The prophets Olen and Abaris from the land of the Hyperboreans.

During Greek antiquity, **the true home of the god Apollo was considered to have been in the land of the Hyperboreans.**

Even the inhabitants of Croton (Lower Italy), a city famous for the purity of its mores, gave **Apollo**, according to **Aristotle**, the epithet "**Hyperborean**" (**Aelianus**, V. H. II. 26; Frag. Hist. Graec. II. p.175. frag. 233 b; **Cicero**, De nat. Deor. III.23).

Leto, on the other hand, the gentle goddess, with a sweet and kind disposition, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, **was born in the Hyperborean country**, according to **Hecateus**, as well as to other authors of the antiquity (**Diodorus Siculus**, II. c. 47, IV.51; **Pausanisas**, Descriptio Graeciae, I. 18. 5; **Aristoteles**, Hist. Anim. VI. 35).

According to Greek legend, Leto, pregnant by Jove, was persecuted by jealous Juno, being chased everywhere on the face of the earth, so much so that no country wished to receive her in order to give birth. Rejected everywhere, Leto at last reached, after long wanderings this way and that, Delos, a small unproductive island in the Archipelagos, and the solitary rocks of this island gave her asylum. The birth pains lasted for nine days and nine nights and here, on the green grass, under a fragrant palm tree, the **Hyperborean goddess** (from the Lower Danube) **gave birth to the great god of the antique light** (**Apollodorus**, Bibliotheca, I. 4.1). Since that time, the island of Delos became a holy ground for the new **Hyperborean god,** and strong religious ties were established between the Hyperboreans and the temple of Apollo in Delos, ties which continued during the whole of Greek antiquity.



Apollo the Hyperborean, mounted on a gryphon, holding in one hand the lyre, and in the other a palm frond, travels from the Hyperboreans towards the southern lands (to Delos and Delphi).
Painting from a vase.
After Lenormant et de Witte.
Etudes des monuments ceramographiques,
II. pl. V. (**Duruy**, Hist. des Grecs. I. 41)

Herodotus and **Plutarch** mention an old custom of the Hyperboreans, to send each year to the temple of Apollo in Delos **gifts from their first harvest**. They wrapped these gifts in straw, and sent them to Delos with a delegation, which travelled to the holy place of their destination, in accompaniment of whistles, bagpipes and "cobze" (**Plutarc**, Oeuvres, Tome XIV, p.518). The Hyperborean mission went first to **Dodona** in Epirus, the old religious centre of the Balkan Pelasgians, from Dodona they crossed Thessaly and over to Eubea Island, and from there they continued the trip to Delos on water.

In the beginning, writes **Herodotus** (lib. IV. C. 33-35), the Hyperboreans sent to Delos with these gifts two virgins, whose names, according to the Delians, were **Hyperoche** and **Laodicea**. To ensure their safety they sent with them five men, whom, according also to Herodotus, the Delians called **Perpheres** (bringers of gifts) and whom they treated with great honor. But it so happened that this delegation sent to Delos did not return, the Hyperboreans were very affected and, afraid that it could happen again in the future, they introduced the custom to bring the holy gifts, wrapped in straw, to the boundary of their country, where they asked their neighbors to hand them on, from people to people, until they reached Delos.
But even before Hyperoche and Laodicea, continues Herodotus, the Hyperboreans had sent to Delos another two virgins, one called **Arge** and the other **Opis**, girls, who had travelled there together with **Ilithya**, who afterwards had helped Leto to give birth to the god Apollo. The women from Delos and from the Ionian islands venerated these two girls and Ilithya as divinities, and invoked them in the hymns composed by the hieratic poet **Olen** [1].



Marble statue discovered at Delos, presenting **the archaic type of the women venerated** in this island (7th century bc). The costume is identical with the Pelasgian one from the Acropolis of Athens.
(**Brunn**, Denkmaler griech. und rom. Sculptur. Pl. LVII).



Woman's statue from the Acropolis of Athens, presenting the costume of the Pelasgian women, with leather vest, a second skirt, and girdled with a waistband, with tassels hanging low at the front.
(**Brunn**, Denkmaler, Pl. LVII).

[1. So, the virgins sent by the Hyperboreans to **Delos** were, according to **Herodotus**, **Arge** and **Opis** (IV, 35), and the ones sent the second time were **Hyperoche** and **Laodicea** (IV,33). **Pausanias** names the first ones **Hecaerge** and **Opis** (V, 7. 8) and another one, sent later, **Achaea**. It results therefore that Arge was identical with Hecaerge and Hyperoche with Achaea. It is without doubt that the names of these Hyperborean virgins were expressed in Greek forms.
In Pelasgian language **Arg(os)** means country (TN – tera) and field (**Strabo**, VIII, 6. 9). **Homer** calls the country of the Pelasgians ***Pelasgichon 'argos*** (Iliad, II, 681). The whole of the Peloponnesus was once called **Argos** (**Strabo**, VIII, 6. 9).
So, in this case, **Arge** cannot have another meaning than **countrywoman** or **from the country** (TN - **terana** or **from tera**); a word identical in fact with **Opis**, the second virgin's name, which in the old Pelasgian - Latin language meant **Terra** (**Varro**, L, L, V. 57. 64). As we have seen, the name Arge appears with Pausanias as Hecaerge, the Greek adverb "**hecas**", **from far away**, having been added. So, Hecaerge appears as a name with a **topical** character, having the meaning: **from a far away country**.

The name of the virgin **Hyperoche** also, is a simple Greek translation. In Pelasgian language **Oche** means **big stagnant water**, word identical with the Latin **aqua**, with the Greek root **acha**, and the old German **Oche**, **Ache** or **Aache**. The etymology of the word **Achaei**, with the meaning of river dwellers (Wissowa, Pauly's Real-Encyclopadie ad. V. Achaei), belongs also to the primitive form of **aqua**. We also mention here that a population called Achaei had really existed at the north of the mouths of Istru. **Pliny** (IV, 26. 2) mentions a **Portus Achaeorum** there.

So the name Hyperoche appears as a word composed of **Oche** and the Greek preposition ***yper***, **from across**, **from beyond**, having the meaning: **from beyond the big water**. We establish therefore that the names of the Hyperborean virgins Arge, Hecaerge, Achaea, Hyperoche (and probably Laodice also) are only simple topic and ethnical designations, and have nothing to do with either the Greek adjective ***arges***, **white, brilliant, bright**, or the verb ***yperecho***, **to excel**.

Herodotus (lib. IV. 35), **Pausanias** (lib. I. 18. 5) and **Strabo** (V. 2. 8) tell us that the **Pelasgians** of Etruria had built a temple dedicated to **Ilithya** at the sea port near the town of Caere. She was therefore a Pelasgian divinity].

The renowned temple of Apollo at Delos, where the treasury of the Greek confederation was later deposited (**Thucydidis**, lib. I. 36), was not the only temple which owed its origin to the Hyperborean people, but **the Hyperboreans appear at the same time as the founders of the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi**, near Parnassus, one of the most important and central places of Greek life.

According to what **Pausanias** tells us, a group of shepherds, who had come with their flocks right to the very spot where the oracle of Delphi would be later established, were the first to start there the art of divination. On another hand, **Boeo**, a poetess from the province of Phocis, tells us in one of her hymns, that **the oracle of Apollo at Delphi had been founded by some people calling from the country of the Hyperboreans** (**Pausanias**, lib. X.5.7)[2], and among those she mentions **Olen**, a prophet of Apollo, the most learned Hyperborean man of that epoch.

[2. The geographer **Mnaseas** from Patrae, Eratosthenes' disciple, tells us that the inhabitants of **Delphi** were of **Hyperborean** nationality (Fragmenta Hist. Graec. III. p.153, frag. 24). **Clearch** of Soli, Aristotle's disciple, also writes that **Leto**, after giving birth to Apollo and Artemis, came to **Delphi** (Fragmenta Hist. Graec. Ed. Didot. II p.318, frag.46). The most **famous oracles** of the ancient world were those of **Delphi** and **Dodona**, both founded by Pelasgians (**Pliny**, IV. 4.1).
The Delphians asked **Apollo** each year, in festive songs, to come to them from the land of the Hyperboreans, for the duration of the summer (**Preller**, Griech. Myth. I. 1854, p.157-158).
The Pelasgians of **Spinetum**, situated near the mouth of the river Pad, sent to **Delphi gifts from their maritime income** (**Dionysius of Halicarnassos**, I. 18)].

According to some, this Olen had lived before Hesiodus, and according to others, even before Orpheus. He is the most ancient hieratic poet known in Greek literature. He had composed several sacred hymns, in which he celebrated the pilgrimages of the Hyperboreans to the island of Delos, and in which he also mentioned some pious women, who had taken part in those travels. To Olen is attributed especially the invention of the hexameter [3].

[3. The Greek authors also tried to nationalize the epic poet **Olen**, as they did with a great many other heroes of the mythical epoch. So, while some insist that Olen was **Hyperborean** by origin, as results even from his hymns and his apostolate for spreading the cult of Apollo the Hyperborean, others, on the contrary, attribute the city Dyme of Achaia, or Xanthus of Lycia as his place of origin (see **Suidas** ad v. ***'Olen***).

But the name **Olen** has a wholly Pelasgian character. This name appears with the Etruscans and the Romans (**Pliny**, Hist. nat. XXVIII. 4.1; **Tacitus**, Ann. IV.72). **Pausanias** writes that **Olen** had composed a hymn about the Hyperboreans, in which he celebrated the coming at Delos of the virgin **Achea** (V.6.8), and another hymn about the coming at Delos of Ilithya or Lucina (I. 18.5), and that he had been the earliest poet who had composed **hymns for the Greeks**, and the first who had introduced **the hexameter** (X.5.7)].

Another devoted preacher of Apollo's cult throughout Greek lands was **Abaris**, whose origin was also in Hyperborean lands, a man who, through his great feelings of justice and his extremely frugal life, had been a real sensation among the Greeks. He used to show the people an arrow, which he said was the symbol of Apollo. He composed and distributed diverse prophetic sentences of his god, and healed the sick with incantations [4].

[4. The time in which **Abaris** lived is uncertain. **Hyppostratus** places him during the 3rd Olympiad, around 768bc, while **Suidas** places him during the 53rd Olympiad, around 568bc.
This name has been transmitted to us in a form more or less altered. In Moldova, especially in the districts Falciu, Roman and Neamtu, we find 12 topographical names of **Averesci**. The name **Averescu** is also very much used in the parts of Moldova.
Virgil (Aen. IX.344) presents a soldier called **Abaris**. Abaris appears as **Hyperborean** with **Herodotus** (IV.36) and **Plato** (Charmides, c.6), while **Suidas** tells us that Pythagora (ad vocem) had been the disciple of **Abaris the Hyperborean**].

These legends and religious hymns attest not only the powerful cult of Apollo in the lands of the Hyperboreans, but at the same time they tell us that the founding of the renowned temples of Apollo at Delos and Delphi (two cultural centers which had shone in Greece for a long time), was owing to a very religious agricultural and pastoral people, named by the Greek authors **Hyperboreans.**

But who are these Hyperboreans, admirable for their sentiments of justice, their religion and advanced civilization? This is an important matter, which would explain several difficult questions in the history of the ancient world. Therefore, it is necessary to talk now about the ethnic characteristics and the dwellings of this people, representative of the golden age of the prehistoric times.

3. The Hyperboreans in Apollinic legends*.*

In **Hecateus Abderitas**' narrations we are presented with different accounts from the prehistoric geography and ethnography of Europe.
Among these, the most important are the ones regarding the ethnic individuality and the abodes of the Hyperboreans in those times, and finally, the geographic notion of ***Okeanos***, and what it meant in those primitive times of history.

The geography of ancient Egyptian and Greek theology doesn't correspond any more to the geography of the post – Trojan epoch. A long series of prehistoric tribes and populations, which had still left a faint echo of their existence in the poems of Homer and Hesiodus, disappeared afterwards from the annals of the world.
The same happened with the old geographic names. A great part of the prehistoric localities were later mistaken for the historic ones, others remained obscured and a mythical veil spread above them, while others still migrated from the Danube and the Euxine Pontos, northwards to under the Arctic pole, westwards to the Atlantic Ocean and southwards past the sources of the Nile, although these were unknown in the Greco-Roman epoch.

In this geographic confusion, that started even since Homer's times, then was inherited and transmitted from authors to authors, our task to pinpoint and re-establish the geographic truth regarding such remote times, is not at all easy.

The Hyperboreans' country, especially in that epoch, when their religion had started to have a decisive influence on Greek life, was, according to what the most important authors tell us, on the northern parts of the **Lower Danube** and the **Black Sea**.

According to **Pindar** (6th century bc), the most erudite poet of Greek antiquity, the Hyperboreans were **the inhabitants of the banks of the Istru**, or the Lower Danube.
Apollo, the great and popular god of antiquity, whose priests, prophets, exorcists and pilgrims roved along the roads which led from the Hyperboreans to Delos, their hymns echoing in all the temples, at all the sacrifices and on all the sacred ways; this beloved and powerful (**Homer**, Hymn. in Apoll. V.1-3) god of the ancient world*,* **Pindar** tells us (Olymp. VIII,46; Olymp. III, 14-17), had returned **to his country from the Istru**, in other words to the Hyperboreans, after building the walls of Troy, together with Poseidon and the mortal Aeacus.
On another hand, **Strabo** says (Geogr. XI. 6.2) "The first men who have described the different parts of the world, tell us that the Hyperboreans dwelt above the **Euxine Pontos**, the **Ister** and **Adria**". And finally, **Clement the Alexandrine**, who had a vast knowledge of the pagan Greek philosophy and theology, named **Zamolxe**, the philosopher of the Dacians, **Hyperborean**, meaning a native of the country of the Hyperboreans (Strom. IV. 213 / Apud Pauly, Real-Encyclopadie., IV. p.1394).

A memory of the dwellings of the Hyperboreans, situated on the northern parts of the Lower Danube, has been conserved in the geographic nomenclature of Dacia, until late in the historic epoch. One of the most important towns of eastern Dacia, situated on the lower part of the river Hierasus (today Siret), had in Roman times the name of **Piriboridava** (**Ptolemy**, Geogr. Lib. III. 10), name which indicates that this town was, once upon a time, a principal center of the people, whom the Greek authors name Hyperboreans.

The first dwellings of the Hyperboreans in prehistoric times were, according to the most important writers of antiquity, on the northern parts of the Lower Danube (according to **Bessell**, De rebus Geticis. P.39-40, the Hyperboreans dwelt in the beginning in the region of the **Getes**. According to **Papadopol – Calimach**, they dwelt in **Dacia** (the column of Trajan, An.V. 1874, p.172)

But which was the ethnic origin and character of the civilization of this memorable people from the prehistoric antiquity?

According to the traditions and historic data which we possess, the **Hyperboreans**, who figure in the holy legends of Apollo, appear as **a branch of the great and powerful Pelasgian nation.**

Their **pastoral** and **agricultural** occupations, their social and religious institutions, are identical with those of the other Pelasgian tribes from the lands of Greece, Asia Minor and the Italic peninsula. The **Hyperborean shepherds**, **Pausanias** tells us, referring to those who, together with their flocks, had reached the southern parts of the Pindus, have founded the Oracle of Delphi, which in the beginning had surely quite a modest character, conform to their pastoral life (lib. X. 5.7).

Apart from shepherding, their **agriculture** also flourished. Each year they sent to Delos gifts of fruit and of their first wheat harvest. The religious custom of the Hyperboreans to sacrifice to Apollo from their **first harvest** (frugum primitiae) had a **Latin** character (**Festus**, Ad v. Sacrima; **Ovid**, Metam. X. 433; **Tibullus**, I. Eleg. V. 24).

The Hyperboreans had a state, political and religious organisation. Their constitution was theocratic. Boreazii, or Boreas' descendants, were at the head of the political government, and at the same time they were the great priests of Apollo.

The Hyperboreans are considered by the Greek authors as a people with very pure mores, and with feelings of justice superior, for that epoch, to those of anybody else. **Mela** (III. c.5) calls the Hyperboreans "cultores justissimi", and **Hellanic** calls them "people who practice justice" (Fragmenta Hist. grace. I. 58. fragm. 96).

The Hyperboreans present in everything the character of ancient Latin mores and beliefs. They are kind and hospitable, religious, superstitious, loving predictions (oracles) and exorcisms. They play the flutes, the bagpipes and the "cobzas", during the religious

ceremonies honoring their gods (they also have a **college of the** "**cobza**" **players** for religious ceremonies, which corresponds to **collegium tibicinum** of the Romans – **Mommsen**, Rom.Gesch. I. 1856. p.159). The tunes they play are sweet and harmonious. At the hecatombs or feasts thrown in Apollo's honor, they sing continuously, with pleasant voices, praises to the god (**Pindar**, Pyth. X. 30).

And during the great holly days of this god (starting with the spring equinox to the middle of the month of May), they dance the "hora" until late at night (Mommsen, Rom. Gesch. I, 1856, p.159). They are wealthy and lead a happy life. They cultivate also the sciences, especially theology, philosophy and poetry. They send to Greece their most cultured representatives.

In the genealogy of the prehistoric peoples, the Hyperboreans are shown as a Pelasgian branch. Their proto-father is ***Hyperboreos***, son of **Pelasg**, the powerful king and patriarch of the entire Pelasgian nation (**Pindar's scholiast**, Olymp.III.28 (Fragmenta Hist. graec.II,p.387)

But not only their national character is Latin, but their gods bear Latin archaic names: **Aplu** (**Alb**) [4], **Latona** (or **Leta**). Still Latin are the names of the prophets **Olen** and **Abaris**, to which we can also add **Orpheus**. Finally, the remains of the language we are left with from them, **perpheres** (gift bearers), **Nereu** (Negru, TN - black), **Helixoea**, or the island of the blessed, are also Latin.

[4. Apollo, an archaic divinity of the **Lelegi** (Pelasgian tribe) was called by them, and also by the Thessalians, **Aplun** (**Tomaschek**, Die alten Thraker, II. 48). The Etruscans called him **Aplu** and **Apulu** (**Wissowa**, **Pauly**'s Real-Encyclopadie ad. V. Apollo). Regarding the etymology of this name, the words of **Festus** are important: we say **album**…the Sabines said **alpum**.
Romanians call the time between Easter and the Sunday of Toma "saptamana **alba**", or "saptamana **Albilor** "(TN – the **white** week, or the week of the **white ones**) (Conv. Lit. XXI, p.355) and it has to be noted that the holly days of Apollo with the Hyperboreans, started at the same time of the year.

An archaic Romanian legend of the Apollinic cycle.

We hear from the village of Floresti, in the county of Dolj, the following legend:

A king had a daughter, as beautiful as "the white world" (TN – lumea **alba**). One could look at the sun, but not at her face. A dragon kidnapped the girl, while she strolled through the woods, put her on his horse, flew with her far away and sank into **a deep and wide sea, where there were some beautiful islands**, covered with short and thick grass. The kidnapped girl fell pregnant by the dragon, whose palace was **in the sea**. When close to giving birth, the dragon was killed by Fat – Frumos (TN– the Handsome Youth) and the girl found herself and also the palace, on the **beautiful island** of the sea. Here on the island she gave birth to two children so beautiful, it seemed they had **gold** on them. Once, when the children had grown a little, they crawled away from their mother, who had fallen asleep. A servant of the king (the girl's father), who was grazing the cattle near the sea shore, saw the two kids playing in the sand with some golden apples. "**The sun stayed in his way**, **looking at them, and the moon also**". The servant told the king about seeing those children, so the king went to see them himself, and was astonished by their beauty. Then, getting close and touching them with his hand, one became white with fright and the other black. The white one was called **Albul**, and the black one **Negrul**. The white one, while hold in the kings' arms, jumped up and burst out (this legend, told by the teacher **G.Scantea**, who collected it from an old peasant, continues only about the second son, called Negru).

When examining the mythical essence of this legend, we see that it presents in its entirety the character of the Apollinic legends. In Romanian tradition, Albul, the beautiful and golden child (Apollo), appears as the son of a **maritime** divinity (Neptune), and the most archaic Pelasgian legend says the same.

Aristotle writes that Greek antiquity knew four gods by the name of Apollo, or in other words, there were four legends about the genealogy of the solar god. **The first Apollo**, says he, was **the son of Neptune and Minerva**, the second was the son of Corybas of Crete, the third was Jupiter's son and the fourth, or Apollo of Arcadia, was the son of Silen, and the Arcadians called him "the shepherd god" (Fragm. Hist. graec. II. p.190).

According to **Apollodorus** (Bibl. I. 7. 4), the first two sons of Neptune were called **Opleus** and **Nereus**. It's beyond any doubt that the older form of these two names was **Aplus** and **Nierus**, meaning **Albul** and **Negrul**, exactly as in the Romanian legend. So, the Romanian legend, according to which Albul appears like the son of a maritime divinity, belongs to the oldest cycle of Apollinic legends. In the Romanian legend, exactly as in the genealogy communicated by Apollodorus, dominates **the dualistic principle**, with two opposite characters: one of the two legendary figures representing the light (Albul), and the other the dark (Negrul)].

The Hyerborean religion was Apollinic par excellence. Apollo, as a divinity of the Sun, was a lot closer to the needs of the Pelasgians' life than any other god. Apollo, tells us **Hecateus Abderitas**, is venerated by them more than any other god. On the other hand, the entire character of the Apollinic religion, as it is manifested in Greece, depict the Pelasgian life and beliefs. Apollo of Delos, Delphi, Athens and the lands of Troy, is neither a Greek god, nor Egyptian, but a divinity with national Pelasgian legends, dogmas and rites.

Apollo is venerated especially in Pelasgian lands, in Thessaly, Phocis, Beotia, Attica, Arcadia, Crete and the lands of Troy. He is the god who protects the flocks and the shepherds.
On the plains of Thessaly, Apollo guards the cattle herds of king Admet of Pherae (**Apollodorus**, Bibl. I. 9.15, III. 10.4), while in the mountains of Troy he serves as a shepherd for king Laomedon, Priam's father (Iliad, XXI, 441-44). Together with Neptune he builds the walls of Pelasgian Troy (Iliad. VII. 452, XXI, 515), and helps king Alcatous to build the Pelasgian citadel of Megara (**Pausanias**, lib.I. 42.2). He fights alongside the Pelasgians against their enemies. He urges the Trojans to fight the Greeks and wishes the victory to be theirs (**Homer**, Iliad, IV, 507; VII. 21; **Ovid**, Trist. II.el.2.5). He often helps Aeneas or Hector in battle. And, when the latter hero goes to the battle field to fight against the Greeks, he takes this solemn vow in front of the Trojans and the enemy army: that if Apollo gave him glory, to kill whomever will come out to fight him, he would bring his opponent's weapons inside blessed Ilium, and will hang them as trophies in the temple of Apollo (Iliad, VII.51). And during this same war, Apollo directs Paris' arrow on Achilles and kills him (**Arctinus** in Aethiopida / **Homer**, Carmina, Ed.Didot, p.583).

Apollo appears as the protecting god of the Pelasgians even when fate seems to persecute them wherever they turn, and part of them are forced to leave their old abodes in the Balkan peninsula. The Pelasgians, writes **Macrobius** (Saturn, I.7), chased from their dwellings from every side, gathered all at Dodona and consulted the oracle, in which part of the world should they settle; and the oracle told them to go to the country consecrated to Saturn, and there to offer tithes to Apollo, etc.

Apollo is for Pelasgians the god of light, physical and spiritual; the god of shepherding, of agriculture, of health, of wars, of citadels and of divination (Calchas, Cassandra, Helenus and the Sybils had the gift of divination from Apollo).

As a physical type, he is of eternal beauty and youth. The archaic Apollo is shown on old Greek sculptures and paintings, with the curled locks and beautiful Pelasgian long hair, exactly as Romanian shepherds and peasants, from near the Retezat Mountains, wear even today. That's why **Homer** (Hymn. in Apoll. V.134) gives him also the epithet "***achersechomes***" (intonsus). And our Romanian folk songs tell us also that **the sun has radiant locks** (ballad communicated from the village Resvad, Dambovita district).



Apollo (archaic type), crowned with laurel and seated on his prophetic tripod, holds in one hand his bow, and in the other a bowl.
Painting on a vase
(From Elite des Monuments ceramographiques, II. P.46, at Duruy, Hist. des Grecs, I. p.741)

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4. *Okeanos* (Oceanul – TN – the ocean) in the old traditions.

In the Apollinic legends, near the pious Hyperboreans, and north of the Greek zone, appears also the archaic **Ocean**, which plays such an important role in the Urano – Saturnian theogony. **Hecateus Abderitas** tells us that Apollo's island from the region of the Hyperboreans, was in the parts of the Ocean.

The word Oceanos did not have in the beginning the meaning which was later given to it by the Greek authors, or in other words, the primitive Ocean of the old legends is not the Ocean of the historians and geographers, beginning even with old Herodotus' time.

At the time of Homer, the Greeks did not know the external sea, which today we call ocean. They had not explored westwards even the whole of the Mediterranean Sea. And as for the northern areas of Europe, their geographical notions had not extended in that epoch farther than the Black Sea and the Lower Danube. The world was not always known as it is today, and even in Herodotus' time, a quite late epoch after all, the geographic Greek horizon stopped at the Lower Danube. "North of Thrace" writes **Herodotus**, "nobody can know what sort of people live; it only seems that beyond the Istru there is uninhabited, infinite land" (lib. V. c. 9).

On another hand, the word ***Okeanos*** is not even Greek (the Greeks had only the general term of ***Thalassa*** for the notion of sea). It belongs to the archaic Pelasgian lexicon, by its original form (**aqua**), as well as by the ending ***an – os***. By its primitive meaning, the word Oceanos meant **big stagnant water** [5].

> [5. In Romanian language the word **ochiu** (and more correctly **ociu**) has the meaning of **locus paluster** (Lexiconul de Buda) and lake (TN – **lac**)(**Cihac**, Dictionnaire d'etymologie **Daco-Romane, I. 184).** So the form **Ocean** appears only as an increase in meaning of **ochiu**, **ociu**, meaning **big lake**. According to **Diodorus Siculus** (I, 12. 5) the ancients understood by the word **Oceane**, humidity].

In the beginning the authors of antiquity used the word **Oceanos** as they had borrowed it from the Pelasgians, applying it exclusively to the Black Sea, which in a very remote prehistoric epoch, was only **an immense lake**, having no outlet to the Mediterranean Sea (**Strabo**, Geogr. I. 3. 4). **Strabo** also tells us (Geogr. I. 2.10), when speaking about the Argonauts sailing towards the land rich in gold (Colchis), that in that epoch **the Black Sea was considered as another Ocean**.
He says that those who navigated on the Black Sea, considered themselves as having traveled as far from the inhabited world, as if they had gone beyond the Columns of Hercules, and everybody believed that this sea was the most vast among the seas, reason for which it had been given the name of ***Pontos***.

Even the archaic name ***Axenos*** (Axenus), given in the beginning to the Black Sea, was only a simple form of Greek pronunciation of the old Pelasgian word **Ocean** (Oceanos)(**Strabo**, Geogr. V. 3; **Mela**, lib. I. c.19). The antique etymologies which propose that ***Okeanos*** would derive from the adjective ***ochus***, fast, and **Axenus** from the Greek word ***Axenos***, inhospitable, have neither meaning, nor historical basis.

On another hand we find in Gaul even in the 4th century ad, the form **Accion** (= **Ocean**), used as a name for the vast lakes (**Rufus Aviennus**, Ora maritima/ after Mullerus in Cl. Ptolemaei Geographia, Ed. Didot, p.235).

This Ocean (or vast lake) of prehistoric geography, included not only the hydrographic basin of the Black Sea, but at the same time the wide, deep and slow course of the Istru, or the lower Danube.

So, in the Argonautica of **Apollonius Rhodius** (Argon. IV. 282), a work of important Alexandrine erudition, the "wide and deep" lower Danube or Istru appears under the name of the **Gulf** or **Horn of the Ocean** (***Keras Okeanoio***).

But the name of Oceanos was applied exclusively to the lower Danube (***Okeanos potamos***), especially in the theogonic legends of **Homer** (Odyss. XII.1) and **Hesiodus** (Theogonia, v.242. 959), probably because this great river of the ancient world was considered the final left over of the great masses of water which had covered the basin of the Romanian country and Hungary in past geological epochs. This explains at the same time why the dwellings of the Hyperboreans appear to have been near the Ocean with Hecateus, while with **Pindar** they appear near the Istru or the lower Danube (Olymp.III.17).

We've therefore established that, from a geographical point of view, the Hyperboreans' Ocean, about which Hecateus Abderita writes, is neither the Arctic Ocean, nor the Western Ocean, or other unknown or imaginary sea, but exclusively the sea located north of the Greek world, the sea which **Herodotus** names "**the most admirable of all seas**" (lib. IV. 85), which **Pomponius Mela** (lib. I.c.19) and **Dionysius Periegetus** (Orbis Descriptio, v. 165) name "**immense sea**", which the Romanian folk traditions name the **Sea of seas** (**Codrescu**, Bucium. Rom. III. 139) and which is named "**Mare majus**" on the medieval geographic maps.

In this Ocean therefore, at the edge of the Greek known world, was the holy island of Apollo, which, as we shall see in the following chapters, presents itself in everything as the **Leuce** Island or **Alba** (TN – white), which later on was consecrated to the memory and tomb of Achilles.

5. The Celts near the island of the Hyperboreans.

In the Apollinic genesis we are faced with two more important questions of the prehistoric geography.

The blessed island of Apollo, **Hecateus** tells us, is in **the northern parts** (understand the Greek zone) and namely facing the land of the **Celts** (Diodorus Siculus, lib.II.47).

According to all the historical and geographical data, the Celts had immigrated to Europe from Asia only late, after the two big Neolithic currents. This warlike people had occupied in the beginning an important part of the vast lands from north of the Black Sea. Pushed afterwards by the new ethnic currents (German), which poured forth out of Asia towards Europe, they spread to different parts of Dacia, Pannonia and Germany, while some groups penetrated southwards, even during Pelasgian times, and settled sporadically as far as Beotia.

Diverse historical and geographical sources of antiquity mention those Celts from near the Black Sea. So, the renowned sophist **Asclepiades** of Thrace, who lived in the 4th century bc, shows the legendary **Boreas** (from the Rhipae mountains, the Carpathians), as a king of the **Celts** (**Probus** ad Virgil. Georg. II. 84 / Fragmenta Hist. grace. Ed. Didot. III 306; fragm. 28). This Boreas appears with other authors as king of the **Scythians**, and **Hecateus Abderitas** says that the **Boreazii**, or the descendants of king Boreas, are the rulers and great priests of the **Hyperboreans**, in the holly island of Apollo.

The **Agathyrses**, renowned for their gold riches – a **Tursene** (Pelasgian) people – who in Herodotus' times dwelt in today Transylvania – are considered by some Greek authors as **Celts** (**Stephanos Byzanthinos**, cf. **Tacitus**, Germania c. XXVIII. XLIII; **Diefenbach**, Origines Europaeae, p.139 seqq.).

Finally, the renowned grammarian and poet **Lycophron** from Eubea, who lived in the 3rd century bc, tells us that Leuce island is situated in front of the mouths of the river named **Keltos** (Cassandr. V. 189 / **Kohler**, Memoire, p.544, 730), and under this name he understands the Istru, which came from the lands of the Celts, as Herodotus also writes.

Diodorus Siculus also mentions the Celts, as living close to the Black Sea. He says "the Celts who dwell in the northern region, and in the lands near the Ocean and the Hercinic mountains, as well as all those who are scattered as far as Scythia, are called Galls. And of these, the ones who dwell under the Northern Pole and those neighboring the Scythians are the wildest... their power and savagery had become so renowned in the world, that it is told that in ancient times they had wandered across, and had laid waste the whole of Asia, under the then name of **Cimerians** (lib. V.c.32). **Strabo** (XI.7.2) writes also: The old Greek authors called Scythians and **Celtoscythians** all the northern populations (Cf. Ibid. VII. 1.1).

When Hecateus tells us therefore, that the holly island of Apollo is in the northern region (or at north of the Greek zone) and faces the lands of the Celts, he considers the same historical sources as Asclepiades, who maintained that Boreas from the Rhipae mountains was a king of the Celts; as Diodorus Siculus, who presents the Cimerians from near the shores of the Nipru (TN – Dneper) river as Celts; and finally as Stephanos Byzanthinos, who considers the Agathyrsos, or the Pelasgian Tursens from near the river Mures, as Celts.

We will examine now the last geographical matter from the Apollinic legends. Geography is one of the principal lights of history.

From the blessed island of Apollo, writes Hecateus Abderitas, were seen some heights from **Selina**, which was not too distant. This Selina, near the island of Apollo, has complicated even more the geographical question of the location of the pious and virtuous Hyperboreans, about whom Hecateus speaks. Namely, the commentators of the fragments of Hecateus Abderitas, some for lack of precise geographical knowledge, others seduced by the text somewhat altered, as transmitted by Diodorus Siculus, believed that by this enigmatic ***Selene***, from near the island of Apollo the Hyperborean, must be understood **the moon** (TN – luna) in the sky, interpreting therefore this passage not in the pure geographical spirit of the author, but giving it a totally fabulous meaning.

But Selina from the land of the Hyperboreans was a geographical reality. Leuce Island or Alba, which, after the Trojan war was consecrated to Achilles' tomb, is situated, as we know, facing the two upper mouths of the Danube, one **Chilia** and the other **Sulina**. This latter arm of the Danube, which in the 10th century ad appears to have been the most navigable, is called **Selina** by **Constantinos Porfynogenitos** (De admin. Imp. C.9), and under the same name of Selina it also appears in the "Catalan periple" of 1375 (**Notices et Extraits** de manuscrits de la Bibliotheque du roi et autres bibliotheques publies par l'Institut royal de France, T.XIV. 2-me partie, Paris, 1843). Finally, under the name of Selina, this part of the Danube Delta appears in all our heroic songs (**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.562).

When Hecateus Abderitas writes then, that from the blessed island of Apollo were seen some **terrestrial heights from Selina**, he did not consider the aspect of the sky, or the distance, shorter or longer, of the moon to this corner of the earth, but he considered exclusively only that continental part of the Danube Delta, which, even in the Middle Ages was known to the Black Sea navigators under the name of Selina [6].

[6. An analogous geographical situation about **Selina** presents itself in Italy. **Luna** (TN -the moon), writes **Strabo** (V.2.5), is a city and port of Etruria and the Greeks call both Selene. The port is encircled by tall mountains, from where can be seen the sea and **Sardinia**, and a large part of the shore, both

from here (Italy) and from there (Sardinia). So, there were in ancient time cities and ports dedicated to the moon or Selene, and bore the name of this divinity. It is possible that today the highest points of the Danube Delta can not be seen any more from the Serpents' Island (Leuce), but this cannot serve as evidence, that in remote times the geological situation has been the same. According to Romanian traditions, a feature of the temple from Leuce Island was its considerable height].

We have examined here the main parts of the positive geography found in the fragments left from Hecateus Abderitas. This information will permit us to fix with complete certainty the geographical position of the island, where the memorable temple of Apollo the Hyperborean is to be found.

6. ***Leuke*** **(Leuce) Island, consecrated to the god Apollo.**

As we have seen from the geographical data presented so far, the sacred island of Apollo was the same as the island consecrated to Achilles' shadow after the Trojan War, at the time when Apollo's cult had suffered a great defeat.

But the renown and veneration enjoyed by this island, while consecrated to Achilles, and especially the authority of the oracle which was there, the healing properties of the island, the continuous treasures which poured at the altars of that temple, were only a legacy of the old traditions and institutions of the religion of Apollo.

Achilles' island had preserved even the divine halo which this little piece of land had when powerful Apollo inspired the whole ancient life from there.

Pindar, in one of his odes (Nemea IV.v.48-50), calls Apollo's island **the bright, shining island**, epithet fit only for Apollo, the god of the Sun.

And the poet **Quintus of Smyrna** (Posthomericorum III. v.775), who lived around 470 ad, calls it **the divine island**, even before this special land had become the possession of Achilles the Pontarch [7].

[7. Even the legend about the **white birds** which tended Achilles' temple, is basically the same as the legend communicated by Hecateus, about **the swans** which came in countless flocks from the Ripae mountains, and which first flew around Apollo's temple, as if they wanted to purify it].

Finally, even the name of this island, **Leuce** or **Alba** (TN – white), shows quite clearly that once it had close ties with Apollo's cult, the **alb** god, called **Aplun** by the Thessalians and **Aplu** by the Etruscans. Even the island of Delos had the epithet **alba**, according to **Ovid** (Heroid. XXI. 82).

During the Graeco – Roman antiquity we find an extensive and powerful cult of Apollo and Diana in the vicinity of this island.

The Scythians, as **Herodotus** tells us (lib. IV.59), adored most among their gods Apollo, with the exception of their supreme (and ancient) divinities, called Istia (Vesta, the fire), Papaeos (Mosul / TN - the old one) and Apia (the Earth).

At the mouths of the river Borystene or Nipru (TN – Dneper), there was situated the ancient city called **Olbia** or **Olbiopolis** (**Scymnus Chios**, v.804; **Pliny**, Hist. nat. IV.26), the most important commercial center of Scythia at the time of Herodotus; and the largest part of the old coins of this commercial center bear the effigy of Apollo. (It is probable that the city had been consecrated to Apollo, and the name **Olbia** seems to confirm this – **Ouvaroff**, Recherches sur les antiquites de la Russie meridionale, p.44-45).

From an island of the Black Sea called **Apollonia**, situated south from the mouths of Istru, the Romans took one of the most venerated images of god Apollo, a colossal statue, 30 ells tall, and placed it in the Capitol with the name Apollo Capitolinus. The expenses incurred by this ancient and magnificent masterpiece were, according to **Pliny**, 500 talents, more than the Greeks had managed to gather (300 talents) for the reconstruction of the temple of Delphi, burnt in 548ad (IV.27.1 Citra Istrum; XXXIV.18.1).

Finally, a number of other cities and commercial centers from the proximity of this island were named **Alba**, some in antiquity, others up to this day. So is **Olbia**, **Cetatea alba** (TN – the white citadel) or Tyras (**Cantemir**, Moldaviae Descriptio, Ed. 1872, p.20), **Bolgrad** at the mouths of Ialpug river in Basarabia and **Belgarod**, one of the mouths of the Danube; names which attest that these lands were once under the patronage of the **white** god, Aplu or Apollo [8].

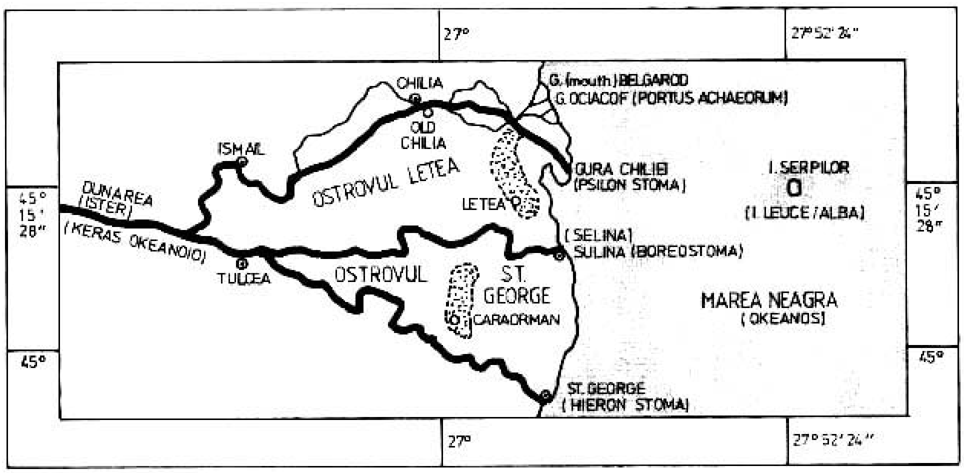
[8. The important city **Apulum** (C.I.L.nr.986) from Dacia, appears, from its archaic name, as well as from its folk name of today of **Belgrad** (White citadel / TN – today **Alba Iulia**), to have been dedicated to god Apollo, in a remote ante-Roman epoch. **Apulum** had been known in the Roman world even before the conquest of Dacia (**Ovid**, Oeuvres completes, Ed. Didot, 1881, p.841)].

And we find a very precious document about the identification of Leuce Island with the sacred island of the Hyperboreans, with Hecateus and Pliny. The island of the Hyperboreans, as **Hecateus** tells us in one of his fragments, also had the name **Helixoea** [9], word of an indisputable Pelasgian origin. It is **Felicia**, or the island of the Blessed, or, with the same meaning, but in Greek translation, it is **Macaron** - of the Blessed – (**Pliny**, H.N.IV.27.1-2).

[9. In this fragment Hecateus tells us that Helixoea Island was facing the river called **Carambucas** (very probably an arm of the Danube). The geographical term of **Bucis**, **Buces** and **Bucas** is the same with the Latin **bucca** (ostium). In Italian language **bocca** has also the meaning of **mouth of a river**, **ostium**, ***stoma*** in Greek (Vocabolorio della Crusca, I. Ed. 1741.p.325). We state here also that the mouths of the Danube appear even today under the name **Buhaz**.
As for the **geographical size of the island of Apollo** during the Graeco – Roman antiquity, we lack positive information. **Hecateus** tells us that this island was no smaller than Sicily, but he immediately adds "as it is told". As we know, the geographical dimensions given by the authors of that epoch had no scientific precision. They are only vague indications. Even **Herodotus** astonishes us with his geographical inexactitudes. So he writes about the Meotic lake, that it was not much smaller than the Black Sea (IV.86). On the other hand, **Pliny** (IV.27.1) tells us that the perimeter of Leuce Island was **approximately** 10,000 steps, meaning 10 Roman miles, or 14km. 792m. According to **Pausanias** (III.19.11), the island had a circumference of 3km. 680m, or 20 stades. And **Mela** (lib.III.7) is getting even closer, when he tells us that Leuce Island was very small. Finally, as shown by the survey done by Russian officers in 1823, the circumference of this island was at that time 1km. 973m (Koehler, Memoire, p.600).

On the 1497 geographical map of **Fredutius of Ancona**, this island appears also under the name of **Fidonixi**, evidently a corrupt name composed of ***Python*** and ***nesos***, with the meaning of the island of **the Dragon**, today the **Island of the Serpents** (**Comte Potocki**, Memoire sur un nouveau periple du Pont euxin, Vienne, 1796, p.7; **Koehler**, Memoire, p.611, 613).
We must also add here that Apollo had also the epithet of **Pythios**, as triumphant power over the dragon Python].

Precious reminders of the religious ties of Apollo and Latona with Leuce Island, have been preserved even by the epithets of these two great divinities. Even during Homeric antiquity, Apollo, the Pelasgian god, was also worshipped under the names ***lykeios***, ***lykios***, ***lykegenes***, mysterious epithets for the ancient grammarians, but the character of which was purely geographical. Their origin goes back to a certain location called ***Leuke*** (Alba) [10].



The Danube Delta. Sc.1:1,500,000 (drawn from original illustration)

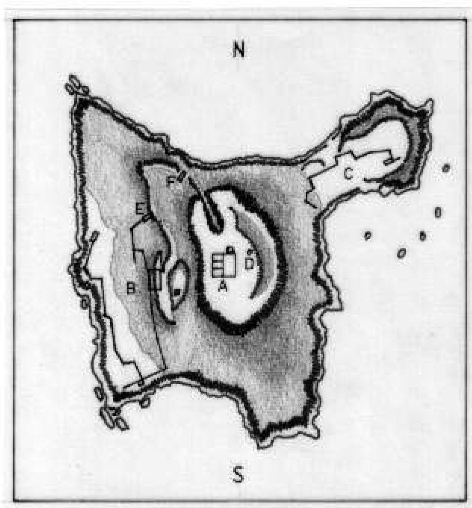
[10. **Macrobius** (Saturnaliorum, I.17). In the lands of **Troy** (at Colonae, Chrysa and Cilla), Apollo was also venerated with the epithet ***killaios*** (**Strabo**, XIII.1.62, XIII.2.5; Frag. Hist. graec. IV.376). The epithet is **geographical**. But the historical question is, was this name of Apollo taken from the small and unimportant village ("topos") Cilla, or on the contrary, Cilla was named after the sanctuary of ***Apollo killaios***, name, the origin of which goes back maybe to Achillea from the mouths of the Danube].

Latona, "the holly mother" of prehistoric antiquity, named ***Leto*** by Greeks and **Lete**, **Letea** in the popular Pelasgian dialect, was born, according to Hecateus, in the sacred island of the Hyperboreans (**Diodorus Siculus**, II, 47). In the old Apollinic legends, Latona appears also with the epithet ***lykaina***, an altered form of ***leukaina***, meaning from Leuce Island. **Aristotelles** (Hist. Anim. VI.35) and **Philostephanus Cyrenaeus** (Fragm. Hist.graec. **III**, p.33) mention an old tradition, that **Latona**, persecuted by Juno, came from the Hyperboreans to Delos in twelve days, in the form of a she-wolf (***lykaina***).
A part of the Danube Delta, namely the island between the arms of Chilia and Sulina, bears even today the name **Ostrovul** (TN – the island) **Letei**, and the beautiful oak forest from that island is

called the **Forest of Lete** (2,000ha); here we also find a village called **Letea**. All these are geographical traces of an ancient cult of goddess Latona or Lete in these parts.

The archaeological investigations made in Leuce Island confirm in fact these historical and geographical data.

In the middle of the plateau of this island were found in **1823** the ruins of **a temple of an extraordinary size**. The walls of this building were still 1.66m high in some places. The building of this temple, as **Kohler** tells us (Memoire, p.604), belongs to a very remote antiquity, the epoch of primitive architecture, or **cyclopean**. The walls were formed of great blocks of white limestone, very little fashioned, and laid on top of each other without any cement.



Leuce Island (Alba, the Serpents'), from near the mouths of the Danube. Reduction from the map from Memoires de l'Academie imp. de St. Petersbourg. Tome X, tab. XXIV, at Tocilescu, Revista p. ist. Vol. VII.
(drawn from the original illustration)

A – main temple
B & C – two other vast constructions
D – circular ancient well
E & F – two rectangular wells of later time

This temple in Leuce Island appears to have been, even from its few remains found in 1823, a monumental work of art. It was richly adorned with white marble, as could be deduced from the many fragments of sculpture found there [11].

[11. **Kohler**, Memoire, p.604: "…numerous fragments of a finely worked cornice, some of which were more than three feet long; other fragments seemed to have been part of **a pedestal of a statue**. The most considerable pieces and a column capital, also in white marble, were removed in 1814 by the captain of an Italian ship….p.607: this island had in antiquity the name **Leuce** or **White island**….because of the whiteness of its great buildings". According to the ancient ritual, all the temples of Apollo were built **of white stone** (Pausanias, I, 42. 5)].

Today though, there is almost nothing left of all those ruins scattered about the island in 1823. The grandiose size of this sacred edifice, of 29.76m on each side, attests very evidently that the primitive purpose of this majestic temple built in a cyclopean style, was not for the cult of a simple hero, but for a first class divinity. Here was the temple of a religion, or of a great divine power.

The external architectonic shape of this construction corresponds wholly to the archaic temples of Apollo. The poet **Homer** (Hymn. in Apoll. v. 295), mentions in one of his hymns the temple of this god, located at the feet of Parnassus, at Crissa, the foundations of which were **wide and very long** [12].

[12. According to **Hecateus**, the temple of Apollo in the island of the Hyperboreans was of a **round** shape, but it is beyond any doubt that the primitive shape of this temple has been modified in time. The spherical shape generally belongs to the primitive temples of Apollo. So **Pausanias** (X. 5. 9) tells us that the oldest temple of Apollo of Delphi had the shape of **a hut**. But the system of **rectangular** architecture was later on introduced also to the temples of Apollo, as proved by the famous temple of Apollo of Crissa, about which Homer speaks].

Apart from the walls of the temple, there were discovered on the eastern and western sides of the island the remains of three other vast buildings, of the same material and origin as the main temple. Their primitive use was probably to serve, some as sanctuaries and lodgings, others as porticoes for sheltering the pilgrims. Near the walls of the temple, on the north-western side, could still be seen in 1823 a well dug in rock, 15 feet deep, with a circular opening; and on the western side, two other wells with rectangular openings, wells which, according to archaic ritual, served for the temple's needs as well as for the washing of the head and hands of the faithful. As it was ascertained in 1823 by the Russian officers, the interior of the main temple was divided by a north to south wall, and the part to the west was divided again in three rooms. Near the northern part of the temple there was a small addition which contained a cistern.

Homer (Hymn. in. Apoll. v.300) mentions also a beautiful flowing spring near the temple of Apollo of Crissa, and **Pausanias** (lib. IX. c. 2.1) tells us that near the ruins of the temple of Apollo at Hysiae in Beotia, could be seen even in his days the sacred well, about which the inhabitants of Beotia told that, whoever drank (in the old days) from it, acquired the gift of divination.

Leuce Island, from the mouths of the Danube, had therefore two epochs of cult and renown:
The first was before the fall of Troy, when this island had been the cradle of the primitive religion of Apollo, from which epoch derives also its name of Leuce or Alba. And the second epoch began after the Trojan war, when Leuce Island was consecrated to the shadow of the hero Achilles, but at the same time keeping and continuing the old organization of the cult of Apollo, namely: the institution of the oracle, exclusive privilege of the Apollinic priests, as well as the right to pious offerings, prayers, oaths and sacrifices, all of this while preserving the tradition of a sacred and healing island.

(TN – for a comprehensive and up to date information on Serpents' Island, I recommend the excellent study "Serpents' Island – between rule of law and rule of force", by Prof. Dr. Aurelian Teodorescu).

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V. THE WHITE (ALBA) MONASTERY WITH NINE ALTARS.
THE ROMANIAN TRADITION ABOUT THE PRIMITIVE TEMPLE OF APOLLO FROM LEUCE (ALBA) ISLAND.

1. The vast size and magnificence of the White Monastery

We presented in the previous chapters the legends of Greek antiquity regarding the island and temple of Apollo from the land of the Hyperboreans. We enter now a new field of study, namely the tradition and legends preserved by the Romanian people, about this primitive temple of Apollo near the mouths of the Danube.

In Romanian carols, old folk religious hymns, whose origin harks back to the most obscure ante – Christian times, is celebrated even today the holiness and miraculous magnificence of a prehistoric temple called **"The great church with 9 altars**" or "**The holy White (alba) Monastery**". According to these Romanian carols, this illustrious white Monastery, great and holy, was situated in the eastern parts of the Romanian countries, **in the island of the Black Sea**, **in the island of the seas**, or in **an islet** of a calm sea [1].

[1. In the **island (prund) of the Black Sea**, **at the white monasteries**, Ler, God, Ler,
Nine priests officiate, with nine singers …
*(**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.43)*

A number of islands in the riverbed of the Danube are still called **prund** (**Frunzescu**, Dictionar topographic, p.383)

Look God, in **the island of the sea**, Hoi, Leronda Lerului God,
At **the monastery with nine altars**, nine tapers are burning,
Burning up and dripping down, drop that drips,
Lake of holy oil, stream of wine, Good God bathes himself,
He bathed and he cleansed, with good oil anointed,
In other vestment he dressed.
(Baltati village, Ramnicul-Sarat district)

Sea **islet**, from the White sea, and also from the Black sea…
White sea islet, at the white monasteries, there are nine old priests…
(Ianca village, Braila district)

The **White Sea** of these folk texts is an ancient name applied to the north – western part of the Black Sea. **Reicherstorff**, ex-treasurer of Transilvania in the 16th century, calls this corner of the Black Sea "**Mare album**" (Moldaviae Chorographia, la Ilarianu, Tesaur de monumente, III. p.134). Historically, the origin of the appellation **White Sea** seems to have been the **White Island** (Leuce), with its White Monastery of the White god].

The walls of this monastery are made of **frankincense** wood, the doors of **lemon** tree, and the thresholds of **marble**. It has 9 statues and 9 altars, 9 doors, 9 little doors, 9 windows, 9 little windows, 9 thresholds, 9 little thresholds, 9 chairs, 9 little chairs and in it 9 tapers burn.

According to a text from across the Carpathians, this legendary Monastery has also 9 pillars for holding wax, 9 for frankincense and 9 for torches. It is very old, covered in moss on the outside, but gilded on the inside. The **windows** face east, towards "the **sacred sun**". The doors face the sea, the door jambs are for torches, and on the upper part the church has iron bars and is opened **towards the stars** [2].

[2. Up there and further up,
God, good God!
Where **all the saints have gone**,
There's **a white monastery**,
All ready for consecration,
With the walls of frankincense,
Doors **of lemon wood**,
The thresholds all of **marble**,
And the inside full of **banners**.
But in it, who are they?
Ion the holy, at the altar,
With some nine old priests,
They say the prayer for weeks;
And same number patriarchs
With large number of old deacons…
But who listens to the prayer?
The little mother of God,
In her arms her little son…
HE throws an **apple in the moon**,
Makes **the moon** exactly **full**,
Full like it is around dinner,
Throws another **to the sun**,
Up on sun, when it is rising,
And when the feast is great…

*(**Marienescu**, Carols, p.28)*

God makes, what makes he still;
Lilior and our God!
God makes a monastery,
And if great, even more great,
Nine statues, nine altars
With windows **towards the sun**…

(Communicated by Gh. Craciunas, Ciubanca, Transilvania)

On the faces of the mountains,
Up in the light of dawn,
It is not the light of dawn,
But **a white monastery**,
Big is, big is on its feet,
On nine pillars for **wax**,
And as many for **frankincense**,
And as many for the **torches.**
But it **was made in ancient times**,
On the outside **moss is grown**,
On the inside it is painted,
Painted, **gilded**,
But covered with what it is?
All with darkened tiles…

*(**Alexici**, Texts from Romanian folk literature, I. 159)*

Makes **big church**
With nine altars
Towards the **holy sun**,
With nine "zabrele"
Towards the **holy stars**.
In the small "zabrea",
The more quaint "zabrea",
Who was siting there,
To what was she thinking?
- The Mother of God sits,
She reads and reads,
And certifies…

("Familia" – Oradea Mare – No.14 from 1889, p.163)

(TN – "**zabrea**" means" iron bar", but from their meaning, that these texts might refer to some spaces up in the roof of the temple, open to the sky. An astronomic observatory maybe?)

In **the island of the sea,**
White flowers, apple flowers!
The writing is hard, the thing is big,
Monasteries with 9 altars,
With windows **towards the east**,
With "zabrele" up to the stars.
Holly mass who is singing?
Nine old priests sing it,
With nine little deacons…

("Gazeta Transilvaniei" Nr. 282, 1892)

With 9 doors, with 9 altars,
With the windows **to the sun**,
With the door towards the sea…

*(Communicated by **Titu Budu**, vicar of Maramures)*].

The altar in which the Mother of God sits, is of **pearl**. The high chairs are of **gold**. The biggest chair has 9 "**drops of sun**". The chairs and the whole Monastery are "written", and the inside is full with banners. The whole Monastery is like a "**proud sun**". Near the Monastery there is a **lake of holy oil** and a stream of wine, in which "**Good God**" and "**Old Christmas**" (TN – Mos Craciun) bathe and purify themselves, and after bath and unction they don other vestments. The path from the shore of the island to the Monastery is called **the little path of Heaven** (**Teodorescu**, Folk poems, p.43) [3].

[3. And big church was made,
With 9 altars, with 9 little altars,
With 9 doors, with 9 little doors…
With 9 windows , with 9 little windows,
With 9 thresholds, with 9 little thresholds,
With 9 chairs, with 9 little chairs,
And in **the big chair**,
With 9 **drops of sun**,
Sat the Most-pure Mother
From a book she read,
She read a big book,
Small book she read,
Book with golden letters,
With letters of silver…

(Communicated by G. Catana, Valeadienii, Banat)

Up in the **White monastery**,
Monasteries and written verses,
There are some tables laid,
Tables laid, torches burning….

(Plevna village, Ialomita district)

What's in sky and what's on earth?
Written lofty monasteries.
But who sits there in them?
Sits Good God…

(Bora village, Ialomita district)

Up are **moon** and **sun**,
Down are **white monasteries**
And in white monasteries
Gold high chairs **written**….

*(**Marian**, Romanian festive days, I. p.49)*

Up at white monasteries,
At that chair of written gold,
Old Christmas sits,
With the good God…

(Gavanesti village, Buzeu district)]

The "holy prayer" is "very long" (**Marienescu**, Carols, p.29), at evening, night and dawn, and it is said "for weeks" by 9 old priests, 9 patriarchs and 9 singers.

At the time of the **big mass** at this White Monastery, all the saints come here, boats come here, laden with angels, and **God himself comes with the boat**.

The chairs on which "Good God" and the other "saints" sit in the Monastery are called "**golden summers**" (**Preller** – Gr. Myth. I. 1854 p.158 - writes that, when Apollo came to the Hyperboreans, he brought with him the **golden summer**) [4].

[4. **Hecateus** mentions **the nocturnal ritual** of the Hyperboreans, during the great feasts of Apollo at the beginning of spring. The Romans also had such prayers, "**pervigilia** and **nocturna sacra** (Livy, Hist. Rom. Lib. XXIII c.38; Cicero, De legibus II, 9; Ovid, Fast. V. 421).

In the evening "vecernie", in the night "litrosie",
and at dawn another mass…

*(**Daul**, Carols, p.12)*

Under clouds, under sea,
Proud sun has risen,
But not risen sun it is,
But **a holy monastery**;
Monastery mass is holding.
Look, **a little boat is coming**,
Laden is with **little angels**,
And among the little angels,
Good God sits, with his vestment
To the ground……

*(**Barseanu**, Fifty carols, p.5)*

In **white monasteries** there are,
There are **golden summers**,
But in golden summers,
Sits Good God;
And close to Good God,
Sits **Most Pure Mother**,
And close to them,
Sits **Old Christmas**…

(From Constanta district)

And cf. **Sevastos**, Tales p.81: "God to us arrived"].

This sacred place appears majestic, not only because of its incomparable splendour, but for the colossal size of its building. The White Monastery is so vast, that it includes "a whole world" and its tower "reaches the clouds". It is also called "**Monastery of the Lords**", which in essence corresponds completely with Hecateus' tale, that the priests of the Hyperborean temple were the sons and descendants of king Boreas [5].

[5. In the island of the seas, the **Monastery of the Lords, White holy Monastery**,
In the island of the seas, the **Monastery of the Lords**…….

(Tamsani village, Prahova district)

We have heard some news,
White flowers, white,
That at the **white monastery**,
Nine priests say holy mass,
Nine deacons read,
In godly place;

And **when the highest priest**
Saw the holy sun emerging
He **was very glad**,
And to him he looked,
And like this he talked…

(***Burada**, A trip to Dobrogea, p.47)*]

This is the precious data offered by the Romanian religious carols, about the miraculous White Monastery from the island of the Black Sea. It is beyond any doubt that this sumptuous and sacred Monastery, **proud as a sun**, from an islet of the Black Sea; with 9 altars and windows facing the **holy sun**; adorned in such an amazing way, and with an architecture and sculpture so incomparable; in which the holy mass was held for whole weeks, day and night; to which, in order to attend, even God himself came, by sea, with a boat, and sat here in a "**golden summer**"; and where the great priest observed at the same time the "**rising of the sun**"; we say that this monumental and important religious building is incontestably the famous temple of prehistoric antiquity, the temple of Apollo, or the Sun, of the Hyperboreans, from the island of the Black Sea, called Leuce or Alba during Greek antiquity.

According to these important archaic traditions, hieratically preserved in our carols, or our folk religious hymns, the White Monastery from the island of the Black Sea belonged to the ante – Olympic theological doctrines, or to the system of 9 principal Gods. (In Graeco – Roman

antiquity the great and famous temples, although dedicated to a certain god, had also altars for the other principal divinities). It had 9 altars, for 9 powerful heavenly divinities, or of the first order, and the holy mass was held by 9 priests and 9 patriarchs (superior priests), one for each divinity (according to ancient religious dogma, each divinity had its own particular priests – **Cicero**, De legibus II.c.8).

This religious belief in 9 principal gods was the fundamental dogma of the old Pelasgian religion [6].

[6. The ancient **Alban** cult, the religion of the **Etruscans** and the **Sabines**, was founded on the system of 9 principal gods. "**Novensiles Dii**" was the name of a Latin archaic class of divinities, which the learned men of Rome could not explain any more (Arnob. III.38). Pliny (Hist. nat. II, 53) says the same. The doctrine of 12 Olympic gods was introduced to the Romans through Greek literature].

But these 9 altars were consecrated to whom, and the 9 statues represented whom, inside this grandiose and admirable holy building?

According to our religious carols, influenced by Christian religion, in this illustrious and holy White Monastery sat:

Good God (Apollo)

Old Craciun (Saturnus senex)

Most pure Mother, or the Holy Mother, God's Mother (Latona)

Great Saint Mary (Gaea, Rhea)

Ion Saint Ion (Ianus)

Saint Saint Basil (Trophonius, chtonic and divinatory divinity, who had also the epithet of ***Basileus***)

Little Saint Mary (Iana, Diana, Luna / TN - the moon)

Siva Vasilcuta (Consiva or **Ops – Consiva** of the Latins, the divinity of crops / **Varro**, L.L.VI.21; **Macrobius**, Saturn. III.9)

And the 9th divinity is unknown. It has to be noted that neither Jove, nor Juno appear listed among these Apollinic divinities [7].

[7.

Up in **white monasteries**
(Sits) **Good God**,
Near Good God
Sits the **Most pure Mother**,
Near the Most pure Mother,
Sits **old Craciun**,
Near old Craciun
Sits **Ion Sant – Ion**,
Near Ion Sant – Ion
Sit in line all the saints
And judge **Sivo – Ilio**
Vasileo – Ilio ….

(Oltina village, Constanta district)

In **Apollo's temple** from Amyclae (Laconia), the statue of the god was placed on his throne, or high chair (Duruy, Hist. d. Grecs, I. 331). The same must be understood also in the texts of the Romanian carols, about the divinities who sit in the "white monastery" on their chairs.

In Apollo's temples were usually also found the statues of **Latona** and **Diana**. (**Pausanias**, lib. IX. 22.1; IX.24.4). According to **Herodotus** (II c. 156), **Latona** was one of the eight divinities adored in the beginning by the **Egyptians** – meaning the ancient Pelasgian tribes settled near the banks of the Nile in the first times of Egyptian history.

Great Saint Mary corresponds to **Magna Dea**, or ***Megale deos*** (Catull. 63 v. 91; **Pausanias**, I. 31. 4), name under which the ancients understood **Gaea** (or the Earth), later identified with Rhea or Cybele. According to one Romanian legend, Great Saint Mary sat in the big altar, Little Saint Mary sat in the small altar, and God's Mother in the pearl altar.

According to **Macrobius** (Sat. I.I.9), Ianus was also called in the most ancient Latin hymns **Ianus Iunonius**, a form evidently corrupt. Iunonius can be explained only as a prototype of Ianus.

In other versions (from Dambovita and Buzeu districts), **Saint Vasile**, identical with **Trophonius** of antiquity, is mentioned after Saint Craciun].

In the text of these carols, Good God is often mentioned as a **son**, a **little son**, in the arms of the Most pure Mother, whose place as a rule is immediately next to Good God. From the point of view of religious beliefs, this folk divinity called "Good God son" is one and the same with "**Bonus deus puer**" or "Bonus deus puer p(h)osphorus" (bringer of light), epithets given to the god Apollo, whose cult was spread in the countries of Dacia also during the Roman epoch, especially at Apulum, the big city which bears Apollo's name (C. I. L. III. no. 1133).

Apollo was identified with the Sun in ancient Pelasgian, as well as in Latin traditions (**Macrobius**, says in Saturn. I.c.17, that the **Latins** called Apollo, **Sun**. On an inscription from Rome we see also the identification of the **Sun** and **Moon** with **Apollo** and **Diana** / **Ephemeris** Epigr. IV. p.269).

In one of our carols which refer to the White Monastery, this prehistoric divinity is invoked under the name **Ilion**, word identical with ***'Elios*** of the Greeks, meaning the Sun.
This divinity, **the Sun**, appears also in our folk carols, like in the old Pelasgian legends, as **God the shepherd**, player on **the flute** (Gazeta Transilvaniei, No. 287, 1890). And in other legends he is portrayed with **brilliant curls**, tresses, or as a **white rider with blond, wavy hair** (as his type is represented in the paintings of antiquity / **Daul**, Carols, p.68). Apollo, writes **Plato**, has the epithet **with golden hair**, ***krysokomes***, for the brilliance of his rays, which are called **the sun's tresses** (**Macrobius**, Saturn. I.c.17; Pindar, Olymp. VI.41, VII.32).

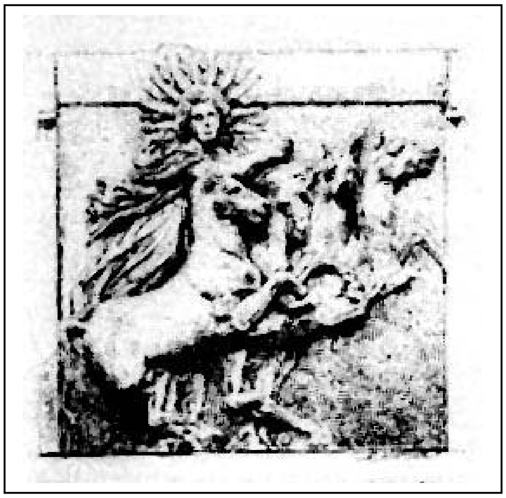
Through these carols, apart from prehistoric traditions about the magnificence of the White Monastery, were also transmitted legends about the wanderings and sufferings of Latona.
The Hyperborean goddess Latona, persecuted by Juno, the Pelasgo – Greek legends said, had wandered for a long time through the world, and no country wanted to receive her to give birth, in fear of Juno's revenge. And the memory of this legend about the wanderings of the Mother of God, who looks for a shelter, to give birth to the God of light, is sung in our Apollinic carols even today [8].

[8. She descended on earth, the **Mother of God** descended,
Her time had come to give birth, and she walked from house to house,
Nobody in the world would let her. Until Thursday towards evening.
She sat down in a little glade, she laid down some dry hay,
And gave birth to **a proud king**…

(Gazeta Transilvaniei, No. 287, 1890; Cf. ibid. No. 277, 1897).

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2. The Romanian legend about the divine origin of the White Monastery.



The Sun, the god of light, riding, emerges from the Gate of Day, and with his right hand stretched upfront, urges the solar horses to cross the universe.
Metope from the temple of Athena, from new Ilion. *(After **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs, I. 27)*
According to **Ovid** (Metam. II. 153), the names of the four horses were Pyroeis, Eous, Aethon and Phlegon, and according to **Isidori** (Orig. lib. XVIII.36), they represented the four seasons.

A significant body of archaic Romanian legends exists about the foundation of the White Monastery. According to the contents of these legends, the miraculous White Monastery from the island of the Black Sea, had not been built by human hand. It had a divine origin, it was made by the **Holy Sun**. The legend says that the **Powerful Sun**, wanting to get married, "scoured the sky and the earth", wandered on 9 horses, for 9 years "through the world and among the stars", (or for 18 years on 18 horses – **Alexic**i, Texts, I.p.51), but could not find any goddess fit for him, to be his "**white**" bride, except for his sister **Iana Sandiana**, or **Ilena Cosindiana**. (**Hesiodus** also presents the Moon – ***Selene***, as the Sun's – ***Helios*** sister / Theog. V.371). At the conclusion of this 9 years long journey, the Sun returns to Iana Sandiana, the "Lady of the flowers", who dwelt on the shores of the Black Sea – in the island of the sea – in a green little glade, where there were 9 "argele". In one of these, which was made of marble, covered with brass (Petrari village, Dambovita district) and paved on the floor, Iana, the Sun's sister sat and wove. Her loom was of gilt silver and her shuttle was of gold (Parachioi village, Constanta district) [9].

[9. "**Argea**" means in Romanian language a rectangular room, half dug in the earth, in which the peasant women weave linen. The word is archaic. **Ephor** tells us that the **Cimmerians** (from the Tauric peninsula), had a sort of underground dwellings which they called ***argilla***, which communicated to each other through a sort of low doors (**Strabo**, V.4.5). This same meaning, of semi-subterranean rooms with low doors, has the word "argea" in folk Romanian texts.

At the island of the seas,
At the mouths of the "argele"
In that **green little glade**,
There's a little "**argeluta**"
In which **Iana** weaves…

(Glambocata village, Dambovita district)

This “**green little glade**” corresponds to the Danube Delta. **Valerius Flaccus** says in Argonauticon, lib. VIII. 292: **viridemque** vident ante ostia **Peucen**.

Green little island in the sea,
Island of his Highness,
There are nine “argele”,
In the middle of them
There’s **a big marble “argea**”,
In it who is weaving?
- **Iana Ghiuzulena**,
The Sun’s little sister…

But his sister, what was she saying?
Alas! Mighty Sun,
Body without sins,
You, great one, do make me,
Over the sea do make me,
Bridge do make me over the sea,
At the end of the bridge
White monastery…

(Coltea village, Braila district)

On that **island of the sea**
The Sun rises,
Here in among the wattles
There are nine “argele”
There’s **a small one**,
Small and tiny one,

With windows of glass,
With doors of wood,
Paved on the floor,
Weaves **Iana** in it,
Sister of the Sun…

(Tataresci village, Teleorman district)]

The Sun addresses his sister and tells her to finish her weaving and prepare for wedding, to be his bride. But Iana, bashful and pious, answers him who had ever seen and where had ever happened, sister to marry brother and brother to marry sister? Finally, seeing that she can’t evade his demands, she accepts with the condition that firstly he should make for her a metal bridge, or a wax bridge over the sea, or from the shore of the sea to the Island from where the sun emerges; and at the head of the bridge to make her a “white monastery”, with a wax priest, or a “wax church, with a priest, and everything else, of wax, and there to wed (Socet village, Teleorman district); or to make her two monasteries, at both heads of the bridge [10].

[10. Go, go and make me,
To stroll on it, when I please,
Proud bridge over the sea,
Like nobody else has…

*(**Burada**, Trip to Dobrogea, p.171)*

Make me **a wax bridge**,
With the pillars of **wax**,
With the doors of **wax**,
With the rafters of **wax**,

But at the head of the bridge,
Your Lordship do make me,
Two white monasteries …

(Tataresci village, Teleorman district)

Leaf of chicory,
In **the island of the sea**
Fast **rises** he,

The **powerful Sun**,
But he does not rise,
But he goes to wed …

*(**Teodorescu**, Folk poems, p.410)*

If you will make,
Bridge over the seas,
And **a priest of wax**,
Churches of wax …

*(**Alexici**, Texts, I. p.52)*

The sun went away
Thinking and thinking
And made straight away
What the moon wished for;
Then he returned,
To wed …
At the **white Monastery**
With **priest of wax** ….

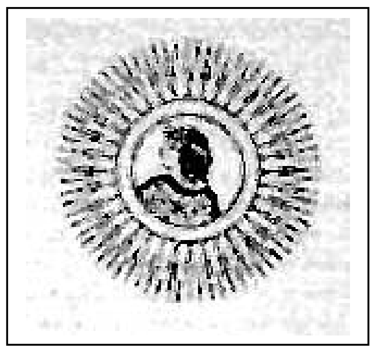
(Communicated by S. Liuba, Maidan, Banat)

I would take you, as you say,
If you were brave,
And you managed, to complete,
Bridge on the black sea.
Of iron, of steel;
At the head of the bridge
A monastery,
Place for remembrance,
Place for wedding,
And to please me also.
With iron stair,
High to the sky ….

*(**Teodorescu**, Folk poems, p.411)*



Iana or **Luna** (TN – the Moon), one of the three faces of Hecate, from Bruckenthal Museum of Sibiu (Transilvania).
After Archaeol. – Epigr. Mitth. V.pl.1.



The Sun, the god of light, surrounded by a circle with rays. The 36 biggest rays and the 36 smaller ones, which surround the solar discus, seem to correspond to the 360 days, the annual cycle of the sun after the calculation of the ancients. Picture on a vase

(From Monumenti dell' Instit. Archeolog. Ii, tav. LV.)

Hecate, as lunar divinity, represented in her triple form **Diana**, **Luna** and **Proserpina** (**Festus**, p.170).The type of Iana or Luna, which we reproduce here, forms the principal figure of triple faced Hecate, one of the most original statues discovered at Apulum, or at Salinae, in Transilvania.

Here Iana, or Luna, has a calm “**soothing**” **face** and “**tresses**” fall on her shoulders, as she is also portrayed in our folk songs. Her costume appears as a remarkable woven or sewn work. From the waist up, the vestment shows **the Sun**’s bust between her breasts, and two other figures, each of which holds out a torch towards the Sun’s rays (Phosphorus and Hesperus). The upper part of her costume seems to be adorned with a **necklace of coins**, or with four rows of embroidered flowers, which symbolise the sky with the stars, or the glade with the flowers. From the waist down, her costume presents in four different sections, different scenes from the Moon’s mysteries and a “hora” (TN – dance in a circle) of goddesses. The crescent moon, as symbol of the divinity, is shown also on the back of the original statue, on the nape of the main figure (Arch. – Epigr. Mitth. V. 68).
Iana’s costume is described in the same way in one of our folk songs. She asks the Sun to make her bridal vestments before the wedding, and the costume to depict:

The field with the flowers,
The sky with the stars;
On the **chest** put me the **sun**
On the **back** put me the **moon**,
And on the **shoulders**,
The **evening and morning stars**.
The sun did not wait,
The vestment he made
As she wanted it …

(Coltea village, Braila district)

Iana’s figure, as represented by the triple statue of Hecate from Sibiu, has an original character. Everything shows us that the sculptor had tried to represent the image of the divinity venerated in Dacia, not according to the exotic models, but to the indigenous costume and traditions].

The “**powerful and shining Sun**” fulfils everything Iana asks for. The wax bridge and the White Monastery are built, and the wax priest too. He and his bride start crossing the wax bridge towards the white monastery from the island, in order to get married. But, while they pass, the wax bridge melts from the heat of the Sun’s rays (the villages Dracsanei and Tataresci, Teleorman district), and both fall and drown into the sea. But God pulled them out of the water, and put them on the sky, one in the east, the other in the west; to see one another, but to be for ever separated, to run for ever after each other, but never to meet [11].

[11. Some Romanian legends tell us that the **Sun** and the **Moon** might have drowned in the Danube / **Dunare** (Petrari village Dambovita district). We find remains of this folk tradition even in the ancient literature. According to **Diodorus Siculus** (III.57), the **Sun**, ***‘Helios***, was drowned by his brothers in the river called **Eridan**, and **Luna**, ***Selene***, who had a special love for her brother, threw herself from the roof of the house, when hearing about his misfortune. Also at the mouths of the river called Eridan, fell and drowned **Phaeton**, the son of the Sun (Ibid. V. 23). According to **Apollodorus** (I. 9. 24.4), the Argonauts return from the Black Sea, to the Tyrrhenian Sea, on the river called Eridan. Geographically and etymologically, the river **Eri-dan** is one and the same with **Dun-are**; the two parts of the word being simply reversed.

In prehistoric geography the word **ari** has the meaning of **river** (TN – **riu**). So, we find **Aris**, river in Mesenia (**Pausanias**, IV. 31.2); **Arar** or **Araris**, tributary of Rhodan (**Ammian**, XV.11); **Ararus**, tributary of the Danube (**Herodotus**, IV.48); **Arauris**, river of Galia Narbonense (Mela, II. 5)].

The Romanian legend attributes therefore a **divine origin** to the White Monastery.
It was built by the sun god himself (or Apollo), as a memento, or monument, of his wedding with his sister Iana.

This precious prehistoric legend about the foundation of the Apollinic temple of the Hyperboreans by the god of the Sun himself, or **Apollo**, was known and renowned in the Greek lands until late, in Roman times.

The inhabitants of Delphi, according to **Pausanias** (lib.X.5.9), told that Apollo had sent to the **Hyperboreans** a church, which had been made by bees, from wax, and from the plant named poppy. (**The bees** were consecrated to **Diana**. The symbol of Diana of Ephesus was **a bee** (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, p.994). In an inscription found at Apulum, Diana bears the epithet "**mellifica**" (C I.L.III.No.1002).

So, this temple of the Hyperboreans was so ancient, that its beginnings had become mythical even in Greek times, and its magnificence and holiness were legendary even with the inhabitants of Delphi. This Romanian legend establishes with full certainty that the renowned temple of Apollo, or the Sun, of the Hyperboreans, which had shined with such glory in the prehistoric world, had been situated in an island of the Black Sea, near the mouths of the Danube.

Iana Sandiana, as the Romanian legends tell us, had her abode in a **green little glade**, on the shore, or in the island of the sea, and here she had her beautiful marble "argea", in which she wove and sewed [12].

[12. Iana, this archaic Danubian divinity, also appears in Romanian folk legends with the name **Ilena** (Ileana, Helena). There was also a tradition in the Graeco – Roman antiquity that Elena (of Troy) was later to be found in **Leuce** Island, married with the hero **Achilles**, who led there an eternal, semi-divine life (**Pausanias**, III.19.11). And according to other Greek legends, Achilles' wife in Leuce Island was **Iphigenia**, or Diana Taurica (**Boeckhius**, Pindari Opera, Tomus II.2.p.385). These were simple confusions with the very ancient legend, from the lower Danube, about the wedding of Iana or Ilena Cosindiana with the Sun and their common cult in the island from the mouths of the Danube].

Iana was considered as identical with **Diana** and **Luna** even during Roman antiquity.

Macrobius, one of the most distinguished researchers of the Latin archaic beliefs, tells us that **Iana** was one and the same with **Diana** (Saturn.I.c.9); and **Varro** adds that **Iana**, as a divinity, represents **Luna** (R.R.I.c.37)[13].

[13. In some Romanian folk songs, which refer to this cycle, Iana is also called **Ana** and **Dana**. **Ovid** (Fast. III.v.657) mentions Ana, considered as divinity of the moon. And Dana appears in the following folk text:

Down there and more down,
Sits **Dana**, **white** girl,
With the youth near her,
Down to the sea she looked ….
Dana, Dana, white girl
What is this youth to you ….

He's neither brother, nor cousin,
But my young groom,
God had sent him to me,
To make **a monastery**
To call it divinity …

(Communicated by Gr. Craciunas, Ciubanca village in Transilvania)]

The Danube Delta, as a land in close vicinity with Leuce Island, had in prehistoric times, and even until Alexander the Great's epoch, the character of a sacred land.

And here was the residence of Diana also, even according to the old Greek legends.

The erudite poet **Pindar** tells us in one of his beautiful odes, that Hercules, being sent by king Eurystheus to catch and bring him the deer with golden horns, which the nymph Taygeta had dedicated to Diana, had chased this fast animal from Arcadia, up to the Hyperboreans' lands, in the country called **Istria**. Here he had arrived to the residence of **Diana**, Latona's daughter, who had received him kindly (Olymp. III. 26-28).

This passage from Pindar's work is of a particular importance to us, as he says, based on old religious traditions of antiquity, that Diana's residence was in the Hyperborean country, in the land called Istria. This Istria must be understood especially as the region from the mouths of the Danube, which was known more to the Greek merchants, and where we later find an important city named **Istria** and **Istros** (**Herodotus**, II.33; **Arrianus**, 35).

And even in Roman times, Latona's daughter was still revered in the Danube Delta, under the name of **Diana regina** (an inscription from 223ad found in the ruins of the Roman castle from Taita monastery, between Isaccea and Tulcea – C.I.L.III.No.7497). Finally, here too we have the island called **Letea**, from the name of Latona (***Leto***), and the port town called **Selina** (or Luna), which Hecateus also mentions.

The cult and severe religion of Diana or Luna, a pious and unmarried virgin, had its origin, as Herodotus himself acknowledges, with the Hyperborean people, near the Black Sea.

In every place where Apollo was venerated, Diana also, as a divinity of the Moon, had her temples and sacrifices, and Latona too [14].

[14. **The origin of the name *Pontos* for the Black Sea**.

The tradition about the **Sun's bridge** on the Black Sea, or on the Danube (according to other Romanian legends), hides incontestably some important historical elements.

The ancient Greek legends also mentioned that the Sun had a **golden boat** (**Pherecydis**, Fragm.33; **Apollodorus**, lib.I.5.10.5), in which he returned at night on the Ocean (Danube and the Black Sea) to his residence in the island.

The Egyptians had the same tradition. According to their beliefs, the Sun's barque was on the divine river **Nun**, Dunare, as we shall see in the chapter about the primitive divinities of the Egyptians.

The highest minister of the religious cult of the Romans was called **pontifex**, namely, **bridge maker**, and according to **Varro** (L.L.V.83) and **Plutarch** (Numa, c.9), the building and restoration of bridges were also included in the duties of the old Roman pontiffs. Therefore the name of **pontifex** was based on some antique traditions and uses of the Latin priesthood. In fact, the old religion of the Latins was Apollinic. **Ianus** as a divinity, represented the cult of the Sun. Similarly, the feasts called **Latinae feriae**, celebrated every year at Alba Longa, present in everything the same character of the Apollinic ritual and institutions, as do the haecatombs or feasts of the Hyperboreans (Pelasgians) from the Istru, and the great festivities of Delos, common to all the insular Pelasgians.

The Romanian tradition about the **pod** (TN – bridge) built by the Sun on the Black Sea (or on the Danube), throws an unexpected light on the origin of the name Pontos, given to the Black Sea in ante-Hellenistic times. The Black Sea was called **Pontos** especially by the Greeks, but why, and which was the fundamental meaning of this word, no author could tell.

But this name, Pontos, given to the Black Sea, had in fact become ancient even in the times of Homer and Hesiodus.

In the modern historical literature, some writers have expressed the opinion, that the name **Pontos** probably derives from the archaic name **pons** (**punte** or **pod** / TN - bridge), which might have existed in prehistoric times at the straits between Asia Minor and Europe. But from a historical point of view, the origin of this archaic name is not **pons**, but **ponto**(onis). In the ancient language of the populations of Pelasgian origin, which were spread from the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, the word **ponto** still had during the Roman epoch the meaning of **boat** (TN – **barca**), or **floating bridge on a river** (**Cesar**, B. civ. III. 29: **pontones**, quod est genus navium; **Apulejus**: et si vado non poterunt, **pontonibus** transibunt; **Papinianus**: flumen, in quo **pontonibus** trajiciatur. In Greek: ***pontogefira***, bridge of boats. Cf. **Diefenbach**, Origines, p.402).
The Sun's **bridge** on the Black Sea or on the Danube, mentioned by the Romanian legends, which appears in Greek traditions **as a boat** on the Ocean from the north of Thrace, and in Egyptian legends as **a barque on the river Nun**, was therefore called **ponto** even during the first period of Pelasgian domination at the Danube and the Black Sea. In that remote prehistoric epoch, the communication on the Black Sea and the Lower Istru appears as a particular privilege of the temple of Apollo the Hyperborean, from the island near the mouths of the Danube. According to the Greek legends, **Hercules**, wanting to come to the Hyperboreans from the south-western lands of Asia Minor, had crossed the sea in the Sun's boat (**Apollodorus**, Lib.II.5.11.11).
The lower part of the Danube (or of Eri-dan), near the delta, had the geographical name **Pad-os** (**Diodorus**, lib.V.23.3), meaning **Pod** (TN – bridge) even during the Roman epoch. And **Iornandes**, who was probably born in Lower Moesia, tells us that Thamiris, the queen of the Getae, after a battle she had with king Cyr, crossed to **Scythia** Minor, and there, at the place called **podul Moesiei** (pons Moesiae), she founded the town called Thamiris, where she was afterwards venerated (De reb. Get. C. 10. Ed. Didot p.431).
The fact that the name **Pontos** was given not only to the Black Sea, but also to a part of the north-eastern **shores** of Asia Minor (Pontus region), where took place the communication across the sea, between Scythia and the higher regions of the Euphrates, fully confirms that the origin of this geographical term of **Pontos** can be traced back to the name given in prehistoric antiquity to **the stations** where people embarked on the boats called **ponto** (Rom. **pod**)].

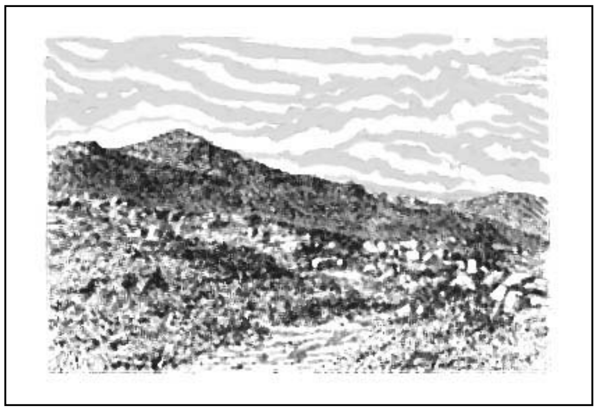
3. Romanian traditions about the temple of Apollo in the island of Delos.

Apart from the holiness of the White Monastery from the mouths of the Danube, Romanian folk carols and songs celebrate even today the memory of the magnificent temple of Apollo from the island of **Delos**, situated in the middle of the Cyclade islands, in the Archipelagos.
In prehistoric antiquity, Delos was the sacred island of all the southern Pelasgian peoples, and later, of the Greeks.
In a remote historic epoch, Delos Island was called **Pelasgia**, namely, land inhabited by Pelasgians. This island was also called **Scythias** (**Stephanos Byzanthinos**, v. Delos), which showed that those Pelasgians had originally migrated there from the Lower Danube. Even the name **Del-os**, which cannot be explained in Greek (**Pliny**, H.N.IV.22; **Isidorus Hisp.**, Orig. XIV.6.21), is Pelasgian in origin. It means hill (TN – **del**) or a bare hill (TN – **colina**).
At the centre of this island rose the mountain, or the hill, called **Cynthos**, not covered with trees (Strabo, Geogr. Lib. X.c.5.2), at the foot of which Latona gave birth to **Lord Apollo** (**Homer**, Hymn. in Apoll. v. 17). And on the plain, at the foot of the hill, there was the town of Delos, and the magnificent temples dedicated to Apollo and Latona. At the foot of this hill was shown in Graeco-Roman antiquity, **the palm** under which Latona, the outcast virgin of the Hyperboreans, or from the Lower Danube, gave birth to great Apollo.
Apollo had a colossal statue here, at Delos, and it still existed around 1420, fallen to the ground. **Bondelmonte**, who had visited the island at that time, tells us that one thousand men had tried, but failed to raise it up (Bulletin de Correspondance hellenique, XVII, 1893, p.134).

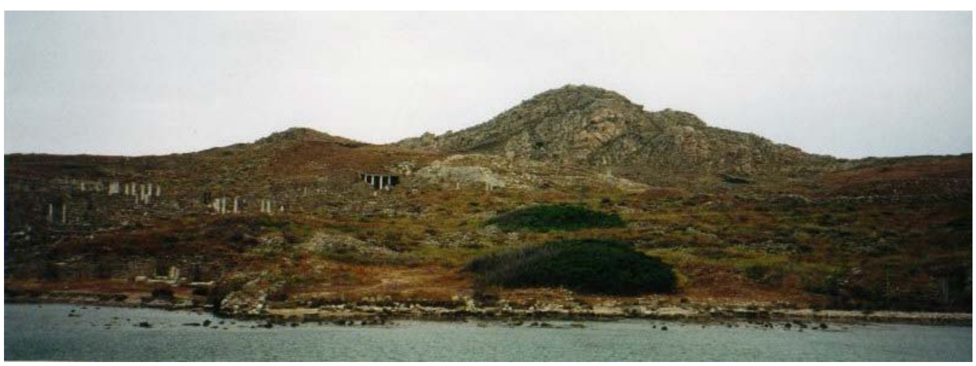
And near the temple, as **Herodotus** writes, there was a lake, called "the round lake", with the edges beautifully finished with stone (lib.II.c.170).

Apollo, the great divinity of the Pelasgian race from the islands of the Archipelagos, was celebrated here with a long series of feasts, parties, games, concerts and spectacles [15].

[15. The cult of **Apollo** and **Diana** in Delos had an archaic **Pelasgian** character.
These two divinities were venerated here exactly as they were at north of the Lower Danube, and in Latium, as personifications of the two great celestial bodies, the **Sun** and the **Moon** (**Strabo**, Geogr. XIV.1.6)].



The island of Delos, seen from a short distance from the port. At the front are seen the ruins of the temple of Apollo; in the background, on the left, the acropolis, or Mount Cynthos; on the right, the ruins of the theatre.
*(After "Expedition scientifique de Moree". T. III. pl, 2, at **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs, II. 159)*



[The island of Delos today, seen from a slightly different angle (photo taken by A.I.Furdui in 2002)]

At the great festivities celebrated here, all the cities of the Cyclades sent delegations, bearing gifts, and choirs of virgins (**Strabo**, Geogr. Lib. X.5.2).

And the daughters of the Delens, after firstly celebrating Apollo, sung then praises to Latona and Diana, and finally sang hymns about the ancient men and women (**Homer**, Hymn. in Apoll. v.157.160).

Here took place the solemn meetings of the Confederation of the maritime Pelasgians (the Ionians), who attended these feast days together with their chaste and "beautifully girdled"

women (**Homer**, Hymn in Apoll. v. 147, 154). Here, according to **Pliny**, was the great fair of the whole world (H.N.XXXIV, 4.1).

Nobody dared in the old times to attack the rich and magnificent city of Delos, not even the Persians at the time of Darius, although it was open and not strengthened with defending walls (**Herodotus**, lib. VI.c.97). This city, according to what **Pausanias** tells us, defended its inhabitants only with its religion (lib.III.23.3).

In the old traditions of Romanian folk poetry, the island of Delos appears under the name "**Del**" or "**the great Del from the great sea**". Here the Mother of God had a "**Church of gold**" (for which it was also famous during the Greek epoch), here was a "**high monastery**", in which 9 priests, 9 deacons and 9 patriarchs said prayers, and to this much praying, the Mother of God listened with her son in her arms [16].

[16. The archaic temple of Apollo from Delos was on the mountain Cynthos, as results from **Homer** (Hymn. in Apollo v. 141 seqq), and from **Virgil**'s The Aeneid (III. 85 seqq), and the later marble temple was built on the plain, at a short distance from the mountain.

In the Romanian songs we find also a memory of the beautiful lake near the temple, also mentioned by Herodotus.

From behind **the big hill** (**Del**)
Holy sun has risen
Lighting the whole world,
Manna pouring down;
And on **the hill**, **in a clearing**
There's a **high monastery**;
But in it who is sitting?
- Nine priests, nine deacons
And as many patriarchs,
Who sat and prayed,
And to God sang.
But this **much prayer**,
Who listened to it?
- God's little mother
Her son in her arms …

*(**Sbiera**, Carols, p.9)*

From behind that **big hill (Del),**
Holy sun has risen
That is not the holy sun
But a **holy monastery**,
With the walls of **frankincense**,
With the doorposts for **torches**
With thresholds of **lemon tree**…

*(**Marian**, The feasts at Romanians, I.p.15)*

On the big, big hill (**Del**)
There's a strong monastery,
Who sits in the monastery?
- The mother with her son …

*(**Sbiera**, Carols, p.11)*

Towards the **sunrise**
There's **a big hill (Del)**
Behind the big del
There's **a golden apple** ….
Under the golden apple
There's **a golden chair** …
Who is seen there?
- She sits and she's seen
Great Saint Mary …

*(**Marian**, Spells, p.188)*

Behind **the biggest hill (Del),**
Where **the sun rises**
There's a **fine pond**
And God is bathing …

*(**Marian**, The feasts at Romanians, I. p.17)*

There **on the hill (Del)**
Behind the del,
White flowers,
There's **a pond**
And God is bathing ….

(Ibid. p.19)]

The **Hyperboreans**, **Herodotus** tells us (lib. IV.c.33), had sent in the beginning two virgins, accompanied by five citizens, to take the gifts of their first crops to the temple of Apollo at Delos. But as these girls failed to return, the Hyperboreans took offence, and introduced the custom of bringing the gifts only to their border, and from here, they asked their neighbours to send them, from people to people, until they reached their destination at Delos.
The memory of these girls being sent to Delos, as well as their sadness for maybe not coming back, remained until today in our traditions. Here are some elegiac verses from a folk song from Transilvania:

How am I not to cry, sister,
When mother has decided,
To separate us,
One to the hill (**Del**), **towards the sunrise**,
Because there's **a holy place**,
And one towards **the sundown**,
Because there's **a hidden place** …

(First published in "Osszehasonlito iradalomtortenelmi lapok" , 1881 (Vol. VI), historical-literary magazine which appeared at Cluj).

These are precious memories about two famous places of the prehistoric antiquity.
One is about the "**Far away hill (Del) from sunrise, where was a holy place"**, or the holy island of Delos, so renowned in antiquity; and the other historical memory is about a far away place, from sundown, called "**the hidden plac**" - Italy or Latium - region where the Pelasgian tribes emigrated during many centuries of political calamities (**Virgil,** Aen.VIII.322-323).

Delos Island had its great fame during the heroic or ante-Homeric times.
The Romanian historical traditions about the island of Delos, hark back to that remote epoch, when Apollo's religion had become a universal religion in the Greek world, when the magnificent temple of Delos had tight religious ties with the Hyperboreans from the north of the Lower Danube, and when this island had the name of **Pelasgia** and **Scythias**.

4. Conclusion about the temple of Apollo the Hyperborean from Leuce (Alba) Island.

We have examined here the old accounts of the Greek authors regarding **Apollo**'s temple from the lands of the Hyperboreans.
We also know the Romanian legends about the holiness, magnificence and miraculous origin of the **White Monastery** from the island of the Black Sea. Now we can sum up the following:

On an island of the Black Sea, situated close by the mouths of the Danube, island called **Leuce**, meaning **Alba** (TN - white) in Greek literature, there existed in a remote ante – Trojan epoch, the most important religious monument of the ancient world, the temple of **Apollo the Hyperborean**, or the **Sun**.
The origin of this temple is **Pelasgian**.

The Hyperboreans who lived at north of the Lower Danube, and in the north-western corner of the Black Sea, were in that epoch the most religious, wealthy and progressed people of the ancient world.

The flourishing epoch of this temple took place in ante -Trojan times, namely the primitive era of the Apollinic religion.

This illustrious temple of Apollo from the mouths of the Lower Danube, played an immense role in the history of the civilisation of Eastern Europe. It was the mother – temple of the later famous places of worship of Apollo (as Sun god), Delos and Delphi. Its cultural influence extended across the whole of continental and insular Greece, over the western parts of Asia Minor, to Africa, over Egypt, and, northwards and westwards over Scythia, Dacia and the Germanic lands called in prehistoric antiquity Celtica.

From this temple, preachers and prophets of Apollo continuously departed towards the southern countries. To this temple came from meridional cities the chiefs of the Apollinic cult, and other groups of the faithful, inspired by this religion, which is symbolically expressed in the old legends about Apollo's journey to the Hyperboreans, and in the Romanian folk songs or carols about God who, accompanied by angels and saints, came by sea and boat, to the great celebrations of this Monastery.

This religious metropolis from the mouths of the Danube, was at the same time a center of theology and literary culture.

From here came the prophets and poets **Olen** and **Abaris**, who, apart from spreading the Apollinic religion, have introduced to Greece the first beginnings of literary poetry, the pronouncements of the oracles, and the hexametric form of the verses.

And still from these parts seems to have come also the divine flute player **Lin** or **Linos** (**Virgil**, Eclog VI. 67), Apollo's son (**Pausanias**, lib. II.19.8), who had described Bachus' deeds in **Pelasgian language** (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib.III.c.67.4), and whose disciples were **Hercules**, **Thamyris** and **Orpheus** [17]

[17. **Diodorus Siculus** (lib.III.67.2). **Pausanias** (IX.29.8) writes that both Pamphos, the most ancient hymnic poet of the Athenians, and the poetess **Sapho**, had sung about **Lin** in their hymns, under the name ***Oitolinos***. With **Eschyl** (Agamemnon, v.121), these sacramental words appear under the form ***ailinon***, and the same with **Sophocles** (Ajax, 2.627).

In Romanian carols, which have the form of ancient religious hymns, it is repeated even today the invocation "**Haida Lin, era Lin**" (communicated by **T.Budu**, the vicar of Maramures). ***Oitolin-os*** and **Haida Lin** are one and the same invocation addressed to the spirit of Lin].

It also appears that the errant priest, prophet and singer **Musaeu** (***Mousaios***), from the ante – Homeric times, was inspired too by the light radiating from the temple of Apollo the Hyperborean. He appears as a son of Linos, or of Selene (Luna), and was especially a favourite of king Boreas of the Hyperboreans (**Pausanias**, lib.I.22.7). His country was Thrace, according to **Aristoxen** (fragm. 51, in Frag. Hist. graec. II.p.284), or the lands between

Macedonia and Istru; but, as results from his name, this famous representative of prehistoric literature, appears to have originated in Mesia (***Misia***, Lat. Moesia).

It is also probable that a disciple of this Apollinic school was also **Anacharsis**, Solon's contemporary, one of the seven sages of the ancient world, who, as the authors of antiquity tell us, was descended from the Shepherd Scythians (**Strabo**, Geogr. VII.3.9), but not the Scythians from the north of the Black Sea (**Herodotus**, lib. IV.c.76). At last, even **Orpheus**' theology was based on the dogma of Apollo the Hyperborean.

Here starts the first period of European literature, notwithstanding that some of the products of this literature have vanished, while others have later acquired Greek forms, as has happened with the ancient hymns of the gods and the heroic songs, which still contain even today, a great number of elements from the Pelasgian language [18].

[18. The Romanian word "**Manastire**" (monasterium), the etymology of which, according to **Isidorus** (Orig. XV.4.5), is from **monos** and **sterium**, (**habitation solitarii**), belongs to an ante-Christian epoch. In **Latium**, at the edges of **Campania**, close to the mouths of the river Liris, an ancient town of the Ausones existed, called in official Roman language **Minturnae**, town famous for its temple and sacred grove of the nymph Marica, one of the ancient Latin divinities. From its form, and we can say from its meaning also, the name of **Minturnae** presents itself as only a transformation from **monasterium**, Rom. **manastire**, in which the second, non accentuated syllable, has been subtracted, as in the French **moustier**, moutier = **monasterium**].

The temple of Apollo the Hyperborean, or the White Monastery from the mouths of the Danube, had a great echo in the world. Although in reality the sun did not rise from this small island of the Black Sea, as the epic poets of Greece, as well as our Romanian carols say, the holy cradle of the dawn of moral civilisation in Europe, was rightfully here. The holy memory of this temple has been preserved to this day in the memory and religious veneration of the Romanian people.

The White Monastery from the mouths of the Danube has no rival in the traditions of other European peoples [19].

[19. A large number of the ante – Roman **silver coins**, found on the territory of Dacia, show on the reverse side the image of Apollo, on his solar horse. These are precious contemporary historical documents for the empire of Apollinic religion, at the north and south of the Lower Danube.
One type of these coins, discovered in Banat in 1840, show on the reverse, the legend **Aplus**, written in archaic letters, and in the lower part, the figure of an altar.
The form '***Aplous*** was known also to Plato (Cratyl. Ed. Didot, p.299). It is the same archaic name of the god Apollo, which we also find with the Etruscans, under the form of **Aplu** and **Apulu** (**Wissowa**, Paulys Real-Encyclopadie, v.Apollo), and with the Thessaliens as **Aplun** and **Aplon** (**Plato**, Cratyl. P.299).

The legend **Aplus** on this coin, which we reproduce here, has not been deciphered so far, we are the first to do this. The writing style is the so-called Boustrophedon, from right to left, and from left to right, form which was considered in Pausanias' time as belonging to a remote antiquity. The inscription is not in Greek, but in a **Pelasgo – Latin dialect**. From a geographical and historic point of view, this important coin belongs incontestably to Dacia, and it was probably minted at **Apulum** or **Aplum**. On other Dacian coins of the same type, the rider's head (Apollo's) is **radiated**, and on others still, instead of the figure of Apollo, only the Sun's symbol, a wheel with 8 spokes, is shown above the horse (Cf. **Archiv** des Vereines fur siebenb. Landeskunde, N. F. Band XIII, Taf. IV, and Band XIV, p.76 seqq.).



Silver coin (tetradrachma), minted in Dacia, representing on the back the image of the god **Apollo** (half figure), riding on the solar horse. Around him, there is the legend **Aplus**.
On the front, there is the face of a king, great priest of Apollo.
(After Archiv d. Vereines f. siebenb. Landeskunde. N.F.XIII. Taf. XIV. Drawn from the original illustration)

The face on the obverse does not represent Jove's head, as some erroneously believed, but the face of a king, high priest of Apollo, having on the head a small, semi-spherical Flaminian cap (apex, tiara), tied all around with a wool cord (sacra vitta). He wears around the temples a wreath of laurel leaves and the back of the head is covered with a veil (velato capite), a pontifical ornament. This depiction corresponds entirely with **Virgil**'s verses (Aen. III.80-82), in which he describes Anius, the prehistoric king and high priest of Apollo, from the island of **Delos**]

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VII. THE COMMEMORATIVE MOUNDS OF OSIRIS.

THE EXPEDITION OF OSIRIS TO THE ISTRU. – THE TRADITIONS AND LEGENDS ABOUT HIS BATTLE WITH TYPHON FROM THE COUNTRY OF THE ARIMI.

In a very remote prehistoric epoch, at least 3,000 years before Christ, an important event took place in the countries of Dacia, event which had a big influence on the emerging civilization of Europe, and which shook the very basis of the first world empire of the Pelasgian race.

This big political and cultural transformation in the history of Europe was caused by the expedition of **Osiris** to the parts of the Istru, and his battles with **Typhon** in today Oltenia, a consequence of this war being that Egypt gained supremacy over Europe.

Osiris, the king of the Egyptians, venerated after death as divinity, and identified with the Sun of the Pelasgo-Graeco religion, was one of the greatest heroes of prehistoric antiquity, whose memory is preserved until today in our countries.

But the Egyptian, Greek and Romanian traditions about Osiris are covered by the veil of antique religious beliefs. We will try to extract from these traditions and tales their true meaning, in order to re-establish the real historical character of some important events, which took place in the countries of Dacia, in such obscure times.

In the **Teleorman** district, in Romania, on the hill near the village **Lita**, rises a large mound, which bears even today the name of **Ostrea**.

About this mound, the Romanian folk legends tell us the following:

East of the village **Viisoara**, in the **Olt** district, there is a peaked hill called the **Peak of the Serpent**. Here a cavern can be seen, in which, as it is told, hid in ancient times a gigantic serpent (dragon). This serpent was killed by a brave man called **Ostrea**, who made **a big mound** on the hill of Lita village, in the Teleorman district, near Turnul Magurele, because from there he had shot his arrow on this dragon. The wounded serpent turned against Ostrea. But he crossed the Danube, which the serpent tried also to do, but its wound grew cold and it drowned. From that place comes out even today a sort of oil, from which mosquitoes are formed (legend communicated by the officer St. Stratilescu) [1].

> [1. According to a tradition from the village Slobozia – Mandra, Teleorman district, **Magura Ostrei** (TN – the Hillock of Ostrea) is on the eastern part of this village, on the coast of the hill which bears this name. From this hillock, the brave Ostrea might have shot his arrow on the serpent. The lair of this dragon was in a cave from the village Soparlita (TN – little she-serpent), Romanati district)].

In another version of this ancient legend (from the village Prisaca, Olt district), the brave man Ostrea appears under the name of **Stroe Novac**.

In the old times, this tradition tells us, there was a gigantic dragon, which dwelt in a cave, close to the village Almas from Dolj district. This serpent had frightened all the inhabitants of these lands, and his destructions were such, that they even moved a great brave man of that time, **Stroe Novac**. This brave man decided, either to die, or to kill the dragon. So, Stroe Novac comes to Craiova, in the vicinity of which there was a great forest, where that dragon often came. Novac, seeing the serpent coiled above the forest, shoots an arrow on it; the dragon then rushes towards Craiova; Stroe Novac shoots a second arrow and hits the serpent in the forehead. Then the serpent throws itself, with bloodcurdling whistling, through the district of Romanati, towards the river Olt, and when it reaches the bank of the Olt, Novac shoots again an arrow and severs its tail. The dragon crosses the Olt and continues towards Ialomita, and Novac chases it all the time, severing pieces of its body, one by one, until only its head is left, which enters the Black Sea, from where later some poisonous flies emerged, which bite the cattle around the nostrils and udders, wounding them.

Finally here is still another version of this legend (from the village Floresci, Dolj district). According to this tradition of the heroic times, “the great dragon”, which had terrified the whole antique world, dwelt in the western mountains of Romania. He was killed by **Iovan Iorgovan**, “arm of mace” (Hercules of antiquity), who, together with Stroe Novac, had embarked upon this expedition; and the head of the serpent, running downstream Cerna river, hid in the “**Evil cave**” from the Iron Gates [2].

[2. Also, according to another tradition, from the village Costesci, Valcea district, this dragon dwelt **in the mountains**. The brave man called **Novac**, riding a black horse, followed it to the mountains, where **a terrible battle** ensued among them. Novac chased the dragon down, to the Iron Gates, severing its head, which entered into a cave, in the mountains which strangle the Danube.
This dragon, according to a legend from the village Plenita, Dolj district, might have had nine heads, out of which eight were severed, while the ninth saved itself by entering a crack of the mountains at the Iron Gates. And a legend from the village Scalesci, Dolj district, tells us that in its flight, this gigantic dragon left a trail on the earth, called “**the trail of the serpent**”].

These folk traditions about the brave man Ostrea, who fought the powerful dragon of the ancient world, present, by the name of the hero, as well as by their mythical content, the prehistoric Egyptian legend about Osiris and Typhon.

Diodorus Siculus, who tried to throw some light on the most important prehistoric events, tells that the authors of antiquity recounted the following, about the life and deeds of this ancient Egyptian king:

Osiris, the king of Egypt, the son of Saturn, was a mortal man, but he did great things for the humans (I.c.13) during his life. The wife of **Osiris**, queen **Isis**, was the first to discover the importance of the wheat and barley, plants which until then grew wild on the plains, exactly like the other weeds, their usefulness being unknown to the humans. Osiris though was the one who invented the way to cultivate these cereals, meaning that he introduced the agriculture (I.c.14).

Under the reign of Osiris, the first mining of copper and gold from the regions of Thebes started, and the art of metallurgy developed extensively (I.c.15). He was the first to acknowledge the usefulness of the grape vine, and introduced its cultivation (I.c.15). Then Osiris, wanting to introduce to the whole world these discoveries, gathered a big and powerful army, with the intention to travel to the entire world, and to teach the people, who at that time lived wild lives, to cultivate the wheat, the oats and the grape vine. King Osiris left his wife in charge with the civil administration of Egypt, and as military commander of the empire he named Hercules, a kinsman of his (I.c.17), distinguished not only for his courage, but also for his personal strength. After all the preparations for the expedition were finished, he took with him **Apollo**, his brother, and, after crossing Ethiopia and Arabia (I.c.18), he advanced through India right to the borders of the inhabited world. In India he founded several towns and erected everywhere markers in memory of his expedition (I.c.19). From India he turned towards the other barbarian peoples from Asia, after which he crossed the Hellespont to Europe. Young Macedon, who accompanied him in this expedition, was made king over the region of Macedonia, and everywhere he went, he taught the people the benefits of agriculture (I.c.20).

Diodorus Siculus (I.c.27) also tells us that, according to what some authors of antiquity said, the grave of Osiris and of his wife Isis might have been in the city of Nysa in Arabia, where existed a column, which had the following inscription, written with religious letters:

“My father was **Saturn**, the youngest of all the gods. And I am **Osiris**, the king who led his armies through all the countries, right to the uninhabited regions of the Indians, and up to the regions which bend northwards, up to **the sources of the river Istru**, and **back** to the other parts leading to **the Ocean** … There is no place on earth where I did not go, and with my goodness have distributed to all the people, the things I discovered”.

From these few still preserved historical fragments, which we have from Diodorus Siculus, about the life and deeds of Osiris in such a remote epoch, it results that this king of Egypt had made an expedition to the parts of Europe, and that he, according to the inscription from Nysa, had victoriously advanced to the sources of the Istru, and had conquered the whole European continent known to the ancients.

But while this Osiris legitimately reigned over Egypt, his brother **Typhon**, as the Osiric legends tell us, a violent and impious man, tricked him, trapped him in a coffin, then killed him, and cut his body in 26 pieces, which he distributed between the members of his conspiracy, in order to make them all responsible for this crime, and in this way to be entirely sure of their help. But the queen Isis, Osiris’ wife, helped by her son **Horus**, took arms against Typhon the usurper, defeated and killed him in a battle which took place near the village Anteu, in Lower Egypt. She then reoccupied the throne of Egypt, and wishing her deceased husband to be religiously venerated by

all her subjects, ordered life-size wax images of his figure or body to be made, with the intention to distribute them in every region of her kingdom. At the same time, Isis called to her all the priests subject to her rule, assured them, one by one, that only at his place the remains of the deceased king will be interred, and forced each of them, by oath, to bury at his place the wax body or face of Osiris, to remind the people of the blessings of this king, and to venerate him with divine honors. The priests did exactly as they were ordered; on one hand because they remembered the good deeds of Osiris, on the other, to fulfill the queen's mandate, and finally, because their own interests required it.

That's why, writes Diodorus Siculus, each Egyptian priest insists even today, that the body of Osiris is buried at his temple. At the same time, the Egyptians also consider sacred the bulls dedicated to Osiris, with the names of **Apis** and **Mnevis**, because with the help of these animals, Isis and Osiris, the discoverers of the cereals, had introduced the benefits of agriculture (I.c.21).

After the divinity and cult of Osiris were so established, the ancient Egyptian theology showed Typhon, the powerful enemy of Osiris, as the principle of evil, as a demonic spirit, as a dragon, from which all the physical and moral evils of the world were born, and in particular, all the venomous animals and plants, and all the perilous winds (**Plutarch**, Oeuvres, Tome XI, 1784, p.346; **Dupuis**, L'origine de tous les cultes, Tome I.p.477, II.p.300, 351. In antiquity, exactly like in the Romanian legends, there was the belief, that **all the animals which provoke wounds with their bites**, were born from Typhon: **Acusilai**, frag.4, in Fragmenta Hist. graec. I. p.100) [3].

[3. In the ancient papyri laid next to the mummies in Egyptian graves, **Typhon**, the adversary of Osiris, bears different names, **Apap**, **Sati**, etc. He is shown as a dragon from **the ends of the earth**, or from the northern hemisphere, 70 ells long, which has his lair on a high mountain, and the ditch in which this serpent lies, this "**son of the earth**", is hewn in **live rock**, 10 ells wide and 3 ells high. (TN – here follow 4 quotations from "Le livre des morts des anciens Egyptiens", Paris, Edit. Leroux, 1882, chapters: 82.1.2; 149.13.14; 108.2.3; 39.5-9).
The Romanian legends say the same thing, that this dragon had encircled with the length of its body **Oslea** mountain, or some six other mountain peaks (namely Pestisanul, Stana Stirbului, Stana Ursului, Oslea, Oslita and Gropele from Mehedinti and Gorj districts), and that its trail, or the serpent's trail, is seen on **earth** and on **rock**, on the coast of the mountains, especially on **Oslea** mountain, where it is called **Troianul Sarpelui** (TN – The Serpent's earth mound). It is also told that even the river **Cerna** might flow on the furrow cut in the earth by this giant dragon, while it ran (Legends from the villages Busesci, Hirisesci, Tismana and Isvernea)].

In the historical Egyptian monuments, Typhon bears also the name ***Smu*** (**Manetho Sebennytae**, frag. 77 in Fragm. Hist. gr. II. p.613), meaning **Smeu** (TN – balaur), word of Pelasgian origin, having in this case the same meaning as the word **dragon** (Lexiconul de Buda, and **Cihac**, Dictionnaire, v.**smeu**). The epithet **smeu** and **balaur** is also used in our folk poetry, as a symbol of the heroes' remarkable courage (**Alecsandri**, Folk poems. 196; **Teodorescu**, Folk poems. p.557, 568).

In Greek ancient mythology, which had adopted all its divinities and religious beliefs, part from the Egyptians, part from the Pelasgians, Osiris, the powerful king-god of antiquity, is identified with **Jove**, and the queen Isis with **Juno**. Even the genealogy of these two monarchs is one and the same. Osiris and Isis of the Egyptians, and Jove and Juno of the Greeks, are the children of the old and legendary king Saturn, who had reigned in those primitive times of history, over most of Europe, over western Asia and northern Africa.

Although the Greek legends, as written testimonies, are from a much later epoch than the Egyptian ones, we find in the Greek version very precious extra details about the course of this memorable prehistoric war between **Osiris or Jove** and **Typhon**.

"After Jove chased the Titans from the sky", **Hesiodus** tells us in his Theogony, the **gigantic Earth** (Gaea, Terra, Tera) gave birth to her youngest son, **Typhon**. He had robust hands, capable for work, exactly like those of a man, and the legs of a strong and tireless god, but from his shoulders, one hundred terrible dragon heads rose, with black tongues, and fire glowing in all the eyes of these dragon heads. All those heads had voices, and produced all sorts of sounds, which can not be described, as some time they sounded as to be understood by the gods (**Homer** mentions on various occasions **the language of the gods**, which was the ancient religious language – Pelasgian), another time they resembled the bellow of a wild, strong bull, or the roaring of a terrible lion, or the barking of dogs (allusion to a barbarian language, not Greek), or they sounded like a terrifying rumble, which made the high mountains echo. And truly, it would have been a terrible thing if Typhon ruled one day over gods and mortals, and the father of gods and men (Jove) understood very well the gravity of this situation. So Jove, gathering all his strength, took his weapons, thunders and lightning, and rushing out of Olympus, he hit and burnt all the gigantic heads of this fearsome monster, defeated, mutilated it, and threw it into the vast Tartarus.

From Typhon were born the perilous storms, which scatter the boats and drown the sailors, or blow on the surface of the earth and ruin the labor of the men born of the earth [4].

[4. **Hesiodus**, Theog. v. 820-880 – According to Hesiodus, **Typhon**, the big and strong dragon, was at the same time **the father of storms**. This tradition still exists today with the Romanian people. "The people who lived here before us, cast spells on **serpents**, and took them into battle. **Those serpents were the children of the** "**strong one**", a **big dragon which goes rumbling in front of the flood**. People feared the **storms** and the **floods**, which listened to the "strong one", and that is why they cast spells on serpents and took them into battle, so that the flood (big wave of muddy water, which follows the torrential rains) will avoid them (communicated from the village Orbic, Neamtu district).
A special importance presents this legend in regard to the name **Typhon** and **Typhoeus**, given to this dragon-hero of prehistoric antiquity. In old Greek ***typhon*** means a **destructive storm**, a **flood** (TN – **puhoiu**) caused by rain, and because in the Doric and Aeolian dialects ***p*** is often changed with ***t***, the Romanian word **puhoiu** appears, by its meaning and by its etymology, as identical with the Greek ***Typhon*** and ***Typhoeus***].

We find other characteristic data about this powerful king-dragon of prehistory, with **Apollodorus**. After the gods defeated the Giants, this author tells us, the furious **Earth** (**Gaea**) had sexual relations with **Tartarus**, and gave birth in Cilicia to **Typhon**, who had a mixed nature, of human being and monster, and who surpassed, by the size and power of his body, everyone who had ever been born on Earth until then. His body had a human form down to his legs, but it was of an immense size, and higher than any mountain. He often touched the stars with his head, with one hand he reached to the west, and with the other to the east, and from his shoulders raised one hundred dragon heads. His body was covered with viper spirals (leather belts) from hands to feet, and these spirals, stretching to his ends, produced fearsome whistling. He was covered with feathers all over his body, and his rough and entangled long hair, as well as his beard, fluttered in the wind. From his eyes, fire was flashing, and from his mouth he threw a big flaming fire.
When the gods saw him assaulting the sky, they all rushed to Egypt, and to conceal themselves from his fury, they changed into different animal shapes. But Jove, seeing that Typhon, who was chasing them, was still far away, hit him with his thunderbolts, and when Typhon drew nearer, Jove frightened him with his steel battle axe, and chased him to mount **Casiu** in Siria. Here Jove closed in, and seeing that Typhon was tired, grabbed him, but Typhon caught Jove, tied him up with his spirals (leather belts), then, taking him on his shoulders, crossed the sea to Cilicia, where he shut him **in the cave called Coryciu**, and put the wild maiden, half she-serpent, named Delphina, to guard him. But Jove escaped from the cave, with the help of Mercury (Hermes), and started a fresh assault on Typhon, whom he followed with his thunderbolts to mount Nysa. Typhon, seeing this, **withdrew to Thrace and the battle took place at Hem Mountain**, from where he threw whole mountains on Jove, and Jove hit him with his thunderbolts, and returned on him the mountains he threw. A lot of blood (***aima***) flew on that mountain, from which it is said that this mountain got its name of **Haemos**. From Hem Typhon ran across the sea of Sicily, where Jove threw on him the great mountain Etna, from where fire spouts even today, because, as it is said, of the many thunderbolts thrown there (Bibl. I.5.3).

These are the ancient remains, preserved under the veil of Osiric religion, about the great war of prehistory, between Osiris from Egypt and Typhon from the Istru, two traditional kings, both sons of Saturn, one worshiped, the other condemned by Egyptian and Greek theology.

We find the same historical elements in Romanian traditions.
The victorious hero is **Ostrea** or **Osiris** (in Greek form **Ostris** / **Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, V. Band. 1848, p.1011), or **Iovan Iorgovan** (Hercules), Osiris' military commander over Egypt, during his expedition. And the defeated hero is the powerful king-dragon of prehistoric antiquity. Both adversaries fight for the domination of the ancient world, and especially for the succession

to the vast empire of Saturn. But in the end the titan-king from the Istru is forced to withdraw into the mountains, where he is defeated, mutilated and thrown into a deep and dark cave.

In Romanian legends, the hero Ostrea-Novac, who fought with the dragon, is presented as the "**king of the Jews"** (TN – **Jidovi**, name very much similar with Jove)", or of the Semitic race. He had, according to the Romanian traditions, very large courts **in the parts towards Tarigrad** (TN – Constantinople), or the southern parts, and in his courts were stone candle holders, stone tapers and coiled dogs of stone (**Egyptian sphinxes**); he was a great king, "**everybody knelt before him as if he were God**" and obeyed his commands (traditions from the villages: Maldar / Olt; Ciocanesci / Ialomita; Vertop / Dolj).

The legend of Osiris and his battle with Typhon, is a legend with a lot of authority. It formed the most glorious tradition of the Egyptian and Hebrew worlds, a sort of religious folk history, which fueled the imagination for thousands of years, and in Greek lands the autocratic power of Jove, either if he were the same person as Osiris, or if he only helped him.
Now, from a scientific point of view, we are faced with the challenge of finding the positive essence of this legend, in order to re-establish the historical truth of this theological synthesis, and especially to find out where took place this grandiose war, which had decided the fate of the ancient world; the memory of which, we repeat one more time, has been transmitted only under the form of some figurate descriptions, edited and propagated by the Egyptian priests.

Homer's Iliad (II.v.782-783), the most ancient monument of Greek literature, tells us that the country of Typhon or Typhoeu, as he calls him, was the country of the **Arimi** (the form **Arimi** corresponds to **Rimi**; the Greeks said ***'Aripes*** instead of ***'Ripes***, to a population from Achaia), near the mountain Typhoeu, where was also the abode of this brave and legendary dragon.
These Arimi, as **Hesiodus** says (Theog. v.304-306; 731) dwelt at the northern edge of the earth known to the Greeks, the place where there was also the vast subterranean cave, in which this ancient and powerful monarch of the Istru was thrown. The placing of the Arimi in Asia Minor (cf. **Strabo**, XII.8.19; XIII.4.6) is completely unscientific and is in total contradiction with Homeric and Hesiodic geography, as well as with the Egyptian legends.
With the war between Osiris and Typhon though, the political role of the Arimi comes to an end. Their name disappears completely from Greek literature. They belonged to an ancient world and their memory appears only as a far away echo, even in the poems of Homer and Hesiod.

These Arimi, by the importance given them by Homer and Hesiod, were during the first heroic epoch, the most extended population of the lands of Thrace, the Lower Danube and Scythia, and

westwards we find traces of ethnic settlements of the Arimi right to the Cotic Alps and beyond the Rhine valley.
Typhon is **Arim** or **Ariman** by nationality, and the dominant ethnic element in his empire was the nation of the Arimi. Under the name **Ariman**, Typhon is shown in the national religion of ancient Iran as the principle of evil. The great event that had happened at the Istru, had also a deep impact in the entire prehistoric world, right to the banks of the Ganges.
A great and united empire had been destroyed, the largest which had ever existed, founded by Saturn, the father of Typhon and Osiris; empire in the orbit of which fell a large part of Europe, of north Africa and of western Asia, which is what **Apollodorus** means when he says that Typhon reached to the stars with his head, with one hand to the west and with the other to the east.
This **Ariman**, the doctrines of **Zoroaster** tell us, had tried, under the shape of a dragon, to measure himself up with the sky. Ninety days and ninety nights all the gods fought against him, and at last, he was chased out by Ormazd, the god of light, and thrown into hell.
In essence and in form, the theology of Zoroaster did not contain anything new.
The personality of Ariman in Zendavesta is the same as the personality of Typhon of Greek and Egyptian theology (**Dupuis**, Origine de tous les cultes. Tome II.285).
Zoroaster, the founder of the ancient religion of the Persians, had lived with many centuries, we can say even thousands of years, after the memorable event happened at the Lower Danube, and he had only subsumed the ancient traditions, beliefs and legends of the west, transmitted to Media and Parthia by the migrations of the Scythians (**Isidorus**, Origines XIV.3.9).
As we said though, the ethnic name of the Arimi disappeared after their political ruin.

We find mentions of various geographical traces of their dwellings at the Danube and at the north of the Euxine Pontos, until late in historical times.
In the list of the various ethnic nations settled near the shores of the Black Sea, **Pliny the Old** (Hist. Nat. VI.7.1) mentions a population called **Arim(ph)aei**, a nationality with the same mores, and on the same level of civilization as the Hyperboreans, whose dwellings, as this author tells us, were near the **Riphaei** mountains, the ancient cradle of the just people; mountains which, from a geographical point of view, formed the western border of the plains called Scythia, and were therefore identical with the **Carpathians** (**Justini**, Historiarum Philippicarum lib. II. c.2).
Pliny again, this illustrious man of Rome, who, with his spirit and vast knowledge, wanted to cover the whole world, tells us also that, in a remote antiquity, various ethnic tribes of the Scythians had the name of **Aramaei** (Hist. Nat. VI.19.1)
These ethnic names of **Arim(ph)aei** and **Aramaei**, which luckily were preserved by the geographical sources of Pliny, present the Greek form of the name **Arimi** or **Arimani**, as, for example, the Greeks always used the expressions ***'Romaios*** and ***'Romaioi*** as correspondents for the terms **Romanus** and **Romani**.



Typhon, from the country of the **Arimi**, the son of **Saturn**, is shown here, according to the doctrines of Egyptian theology, half man, half dragon. He holds in his right hand the shepherd’s hook, the emblem of imperial authority with the northern Pelasgians. In his left hand he holds a staff, the symbol of kingly power over the southern countries.
After the **Egyptian planisphere**, discovered by Bianchini in Rome, and sent to the Academy of Sciences of Paris (**Dupuis**, Origine de tous les cultes. Atlas, pl.5) [5].

[5. The costume of Typhon, as results from this symbolic presentation, was composed of a shirt with large sleeves, and long embroidered tight trousers, having at the lower part the shape of two wings for each leg, like the traditional trousers worn in Oltenia today. Over the waist he had a leather belt. The Egyptian priests have also attributed to Typhon a celestial character. On the Egyptian Planisphere, the entire northern hemisphere bears the name of “**Statio Typhonia**”, or “**Statio Typhonis**”. And **Plutarch** (Oeuvres, XI, p.308) tells us that the Egyptian priests considered the constellation **Ursa**, as the astronomical symbol of Typhon. Under the “Big Ursa”, according to the ideas of the ancients, dwelt the **Sarmatians** and the **Getae** (**Ovid**, Trist. III. 11.8; V. 3.7-8)].

We find a precious ethnic data regarding the Arimi, with the learned Alexandrine geographer **Ptolemy**, who had lived in the time of Adrian and Marc Aurelius. He is the only one, among all the geographers of that epoch, who mentions an ancient ante-Roman city called **Ramidava** (Geogr. III.c.8), meaning the city of the **Rami**, located in the southern part of this province, namely close to the river called today Buzeu.

Another important group of prehistoric **Rami** had in those times their dwellings near the Meotic lake (**Pliny**, H.N.VI.7.2), and beyond the Rhine, Cesar’s expedition made known to us the **Remi** or **Rhemi** (***‘Remoi***), one of the largest, most noble and powerful populations of Belgian Gaul, friends and allies of the Roman people (**Caesaris**, B.G.II.3, III.5, VII.90; **Pliny**, lib. IV. 31).

Homer’s Iliad has also preserved the memory of a Pelasgian lord with the name of **Rigm-os**, the son of Pirous of Thrace, hero who had taken part in the war with the Greeks as ally of the Trojans (Ilias, XX.v.484-5).

Between Drava and Sava, there appears during the Roman epoch, a locality with the name of **Ramista** (Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum, Ed. Parthey, p.266), or **Remista** (Die Peutingersche Tafel, Segm. V.3, Ed.Miller, 1888); in upper Moesia there was **Remisiana** (Itiner. Antonini, Ed. Parthey, p.63) or **Romesiana** (Die Peuting.Tafel, Segm.Vii.5); eastwards from Philippopoli there were **Ramlum** (Ibid. Segm.VIII.2) and **Rhamis** (Itin. Hierosol. P.269), and at the foot of the Cotic Alps, in the Narbonnese Gaul, there was the town **Ramae** (Ibid.p.263) - geographical names the

origin of which goes back to the ancient, extensive and homogenous population of the **Rimi or Arimi**, which had become so famous in prehistoric times.

We find new geographical elements regarding the country of Typhon, and the power center of the ancient Arimi, in the important description preserved by Apollodorus.

The first battle with Typhon, this author tells us, took place at the mountain called **Casiu**, ***Kasion oros,*** and this time the success was on the part of Typhon. The titan king from the Istru, caught Jove, his adversary, and imprisoned him in the cave called **Coryciu**.

This mountain Casiu, which had become so famous in the war of Osiris (Jove) with Typhon, also had a historical role in the first war of Trajan with the Dacians.

Trajan, **Suidas** tells us, dedicated to **Jove from the mountain Casiu** (meaning to a sanctuary there), some silver craters and an enormous gilded ox horn, as gifts for his victory against the **Getae**. So, it is incontestable that this "Casion oros", whose memory is preserved in two great wars which took place near the Istru, could not be in Antioch Syria, where the Greek authors have tried to place the first battles of Jove with Typhon, as well as the solemn sacrifices made by Trajan in gratitude for his victories against the Dacians [6].

[6. The mountain **Casiu** was, according to **Apollodorus** (I.6.3) in "**Syria from beyond**". Which was though this Syria from beyond? The term ***yper***… used in this case by the sources of Apollodorus, indicates quite exactly that here is not meant an Asiatic Syria, but a Syria from the north of the Greek regions (cf. **Polyb**. IV.29.1). **Stephanos Byzanthinos** mentions a city or a region (***polis***) in Thrace with the name ***Sirra***, whose geographical situation is unfortunately unknown. And in ancient times, under the name of Thrace was understood **the entire north of Europe, above Greece** (St. Byz.***Skythai***)].

An important part of the crest of the Carpathians, which stretches from the Iron Gates up, towards Retezat mountains, had and still has today the name of **Cosiu**, name identical in essence and form with ***Kasion oros***, mentioned by Apollodorus.

In the center of this vast semi-circle of the Carpathians, which encloses the western plains of Romania, and especially at the point of origin of the valley called Topolnita, we are presented with one of the most important natural defensive positions of this region, namely the mountain called **Gradet**, and at the foot of this mountain, another steep crest called **Cosuri**, term which belongs to the same type of names as ***Kasion*** and **Cosiu**. On the top of this high peak of Gradet, can be seen even today the ruins of an extensive gigantic wall called "**Zidina Dachilor**" (TN – zid = wall). The remains of this strong and colossal fortification belong to an archaic defensive system. It is a vast fortified enclosure, whose primitive function was to protect the inhabitants of western Oltenia against the enemy invasions, coming from the lower regions, or from the Danube.

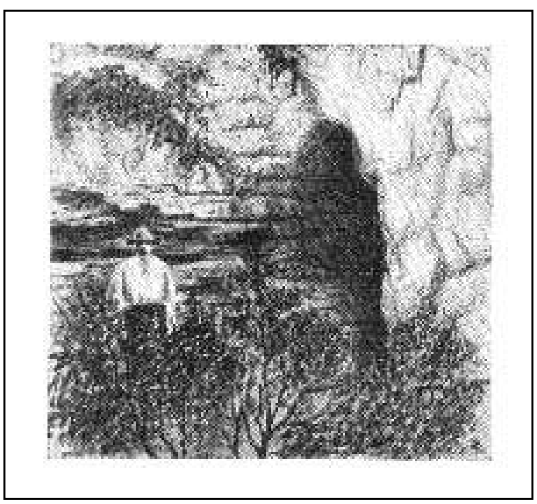
"I have never seen until today", writes **Cesar Bolliac**, "any other Dacian fortress, with such a size, strength and built on such a height. Here the stone is hewn from the neighboring mountains, and

thrown on this peak with a titanic force, then gathered and tied together with a cement as strong as the rock" (Trompeta Carpatilor, nr. 785, 1869).

In the neighborhood of this strong defensive centre, strengthened by nature and by the hand of man, can be found even today various stone tools and Neolithic pottery. The traditions tell us that here was in antiquity the theater of a great war with a people from the southern regions (**Spineanu**, Dict. Geogr. Jud. Mehedinti, p.166). Here could be seen until our days, between the villages Balotesci and Scanteiesci, the enormous stone boulders of an extensive necropolis, called by the folk people "**the graves of the Jidovi**", or of the giants (**Spineanu**, ibid. p.166; **Filip**, Studiu de geografie militara asupra Olteniei, p.96).

But what is of a special importance for the study of these historical events, is that, in this same region, between the villages Balotesci and Isvorul Barzei, not far from the mountain Gradet, there is the village and tableland called **Curecea**, and facing this tableland, there is a cavern with a particular folk tradition, analogous to that of ***Korikion antron***, namely that in this cavern from Curecea there was a Jidov or a giant; imprisoned or not, the tradition doesn't tell [7].

[7. This cave is situated in front of the **tableland Curecea**, on the hill called "**Petra cu ciorele**" (TN – the **Rock with the crows**), which is situated on the right bank of the river Topolnita, between the villages Balotesci and Isvorul Barzei, close to Severin.
The positive etymology of the name ***Korikion antron*** seems to be the word ***koraxi***, Lat. **Corax**, raven, crow (TN – **ciora**). We find a similar name with the geographer **Mela** (lib. I.19; III.5), who mentions in a vague way a long chain of mountains called "**mons Coraxicus**", which was connected to the Rhipaei mountains. We also find with Mela (I.13) an important topographical note regarding this cavern (**specus Corycius**). Near this cavern, he says, there is also a big river, which springs from a vast mouth and which, after flowing for a short distance, sinks and disappears again into the earth. Almost the same phenomenon presents today the river Topolnita, which flows along the foot of the hill, in which there is the cavern from nearby Curecea. Then this river sinks into the earth at the hill named Prosec, and reemerges at the mouth of the Cave facing Topolnita monastery].



The cavern near the tableland **Curecea**, between the villages Balotesci and Isvorul-Barzei (Mehedinti district, Romania), considered to be the same as ***Korikion antron***, in which, according to the legends of antiquity, **Typhon** from the country of the **Arimi**, had imprisoned **Jove** (Osiris).
View from the left bank of Topolnita river.
Drawing from a photograph from the year 1900.

We can therefore affirm that, according to traditions and legends, as well as to the identification of the topographical names, the first episode of this great war between Jove and Typhon, or the so-

called battle from the Casiu mountain, took place in western Oltenia, in the mountain which was named in ancient times **Cosiu**, close to the cavern at **Curecea**, where the defensive base of Typhon was formed by the mountain Gradet, at the point of origin of Topolnita valley, which dominates the whole plain of the **Severin**.

But Jove, as Apollodorus tells us, escaped quickly from the cavern of Coryciu and the gigantic war between the two coalitions of races, of the south and of the north, starts again. This time the battles are fought with extreme violence near the Hem mountain.

Those were times far beyond the limits of history and we have to make clear the following geographical notion:

Hem mountain of the sacred legends of ancient times is not the Hem mountain of historical times, or the mountain chain of the Balkans, south of the Lower Danube.

With **Suidas** and **Stephanos Byzanthinos**, the strong crown of the **Carpathian** mountains appear under the name of **Hem**. (The **Agathyrses**, as **Herodotus** tells us – IV.38 – dwelt near the river **Maris**, meaning the central parts of today Transilvania. And according to Stephanos Byzanthinos and Suidas, they dwelt in the inner parts of the Hem mountain). Even the geographical sources which **Herodotus** used (lib.IV.c.49), told that the river **Atlas** or **Oltul** sprang from the top of the Hem mountain (**Tomaschek**, Die alten Thraker, I.p.10).

(TN – I feel compelled to add here some explanation of my own. According to British Encyclopedia – Europe - the true geological limit of the Carpathians in the south is the structural depression of the Timok River in Yugoslavia, although split apart at the Iron Gate by the gap valley of the Danube. So in time, the name Hem was applied only to the mountains south of the Danube).

At this Hem mountain, at the north of the Lower Danube, came to a close the last act of the great prehistoric drama, the memory of which took a symbolic form, and was preserved in the sacred history of the ancient world [8].

[8. According to **Pherecydes**, a Greek historian (5^{th} century ad), Typhon, chased by Jove, withdrew in the **Caucas** mountains, but there, the mountains taking fire, he was forced to run to **Italy** (Fragmenta Histor. Graec. I. 72. Fragm.14). In antique geography, the **Carpathians** often figure under the name of **Caucas**. A proof in this regard is the inscription from the epoch of Trajan: Ad Alutum flumen secus mont(is) Caucasi (**Froehner**, La Colonne Trajane, Append. Nr.16; **Jornandes**, De reb. Get. C. VII)].

Leaving now the mythical envelope of this important event of ante-Trojan times, we can recapitulate the historical essence of these traditions as follows:

In a very remote prehistoric antiquity, epoch which coincides with the beginning of the decline of the great Pelasgian empire, two powerful kings, both Saturn’s sons, born from two different mothers, by country, nationality and education, one reigning in the south, with his residence in Egypt, the other in the north, with his power centre in Dacia, fight for the domination of the ancient world. Typhon’s empire was vast. His power stretched, as Apollodorus writes, from west to east, and this legendary monarch of prehistory, wanted to reign not only over men, but also over the

sky. He aspired to divine honors, exactly as Uranos had, his grandfather and Saturn, his father. The war is long and of extreme violence. The expedition of Osiris over Ethiopia, Arabia, and to the extreme parts of India, then his return over the Iranian plateau and his crossing over the Hellespont to Thrace, had as a consequence the establishing of a powerful coalition formed from Egyptians, Greeks, Arabs, Indians and other Asian barbarians, in order to defeat the domination of the northern Pelasgians, of the Arimi, and to conquer the Rhipaei mountains. The big war strategy of Osiris targets the Istru, and the theatre of the principal battles is on the territory of ancient Dacia, close to the Iron Gates. The balance of victory alternates. In the first war Typhon is victorious; he catches Jove or Osiris and imprisons him in the cavern from Coryciu (Curecea). In the second war, Typhon defends himself with great energy on the strong positions near the crests of Cerna (Hem mountain). Finally he is defeated by the allied powers of the Egyptians, Greeks, Arabs and Indians, and, forced to withdraw towards Italy, the country where Pelagian tribes from near the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea always found refuge, when fate was persecuting them.

With the defeat of Typhon, the Egyptian supremacy and its religious influence are established at the Lower Danube, in Scythia and in the central parts of Europe, and the Osiric legends conceived by the Egyptian theology, present the defeated hero as the father of darkness, as typifying all the moral and physical evils, as a demon-dragon, enemy of the gods and humankind.

In this symbolic form it was established and propagated the apotheosis of Osiris, not only in Egypt and Asia, but also in Europe, and it has been preserved until today in Romanian legends.

At this expedition of Osiris in the parts of Dacia refers an important passage from the Argonautica of **Valeriu Flaccus** (VI. 114-119), who, based on some old historical sources, mentions the multitudes of peoples pouring out of Egypt, Arabia and India, to conquer the Rhipaei mountains.

“The holy prophet Varus (Abaris?)” he writes, “brings swarms of peoples from the holy forests of Hyrcania (to fight against the Argonauts). For three years he’s been foretelling to Scythia the coming of the brave Argonauts with the ship called Argo (to steal the Golden fleece). Believing his oracles, the wealthy nations of India and the cultivated fields of Egyptian Thebe with one hundred gates, and the entire Arabia, rush to conquer the Rhipaei mountains (rich in gold)”.

The place where Osiris was buried it has remained unknown to the ancients [9].

[9. There still exist with the Romanian people some traditions regarding the death and the grave of this distinguished hero. Ostrea-Novac, tells us a legend from the village Soparlita, was buried **alive** in a mountain, and according to other legends from the villages Bursucani, Covurlui district, and Topal, Constanta district, Novac and Iorgovan were very adept at using the bow and arrows, and both buried themselves alive, when the deceptive fire arms were invented in order to replace the old ones, saying that “they go now underground”. This tradition is basically identical with the antique legend about the **descent** of Hercules and Dionysus (Osiris) to hell (**Plato, Axiochus**)].

This had been in fact the wish of Queen Isis, who had decided to bury in each city a wax simulacrum of her deceased husband. Cause for which, writes **Diodorus Siculus** (I.c.21), each Egyptian priest believed that the body of Osiris was buried at his place.
On the territory of the Romanian country there are two primitive monuments, which serve as testimony of those events, **two large mounds, very ancient**, which have the name of Ostrea or Osiris. One of these mounds is on the territory of the Teleorman district, near the village Slobozia-Mandra, and the other is in the district Dolj, at the village Comosceni. By traditions, these archaic tumuli of our countries appear only as **commemorative mounds**.

Osiris, **Diodorus Siculus** tells us (lib.I.c.19), after wandering about India, as far as the uninhabited lands, left there several monumental markers, in the memory of his expedition. Some of these monuments about the “arrival” of Osiris in India, were probably only simple commemorative mounds. King **Darius** of the Persians did the same thing also. When reaching the river Artiscus, from the region of the Odrysi in **Thrace**, he asked his soldiers to erect there several mounds of rocks, as signs for the posterity that the vast empire of the Persians had extended also to Europe (**Herodotus**, lib.IV.c.92).

Such commemorative monuments of the expedition of Osiris existed not only in the countries of Dacia, but even across the Danube.
On the south-west side of the city Philippopoli (TN – today Plovdiv) there is even today a village named **Ostra Mogila**, meaning the **Mound of Ostrea** or Osiris. Another mound with the name of this legendary monarch was at the ancient **Gate** of the Hem mountain. From Philippopoli towards the Danube, the shortest road and most practicable was in antiquity through the mountain pass between Karlovo and Trojan (**Jirecek**, Die Heerstrasse von Belgrad nach Constantinopel, p.156; **Kanitz**, Donau-Bulgarien, II.97), which bears even today the name **Ostra Mogila**, (**Kanitz**, Donau-Bulgarien, III.171). This is an important reminiscence about the crossing of the Balkan mountains at this point, by the great Egyptian conqueror, who came on the North with his infinite columns of Africans and Asians. At the northern side of this mountain pass there was during the Roman epoch a city called **Sostra** (Tab. Peut.), which is a simple official variant of the folk form Ostrea, Osiris being identical with Sesostris.
A promontory at the straits of the Bosphorus, on the territory of Bithynia, had in antiquity the name ***‘Oxirrous akra***, because on this height had probably been erected a mound, or a column, in the memory of the arrival of Osiris to the most important point of the ancient world, where the roads of the west and east met with those of the north and south (**Dionysius Byzantius**, Anaplus Bospori, in Fragm. Hist. Graec. V. p. 188).
Similarly king Darius, as **Herodotus** tells us, arriving at the Bosphorus, sailed with his ship to the islands called Cyaneae, from where he admired the beauty of the Black Sea, then, returning to

the bridge that had been built by the architect Mandroclus, erected on the shores of the Bosphorus two columns of white stone, with the names of all the peoples led by him to war against the Scythians (lib. IV. c. 85-87).

The mounds on the territory of the Romanian country and on the Balkan peninsula, which bear even today the name of Ostrea, appear therefore as primitive monuments, but solemn ones, destined to perpetuate the memory of the expedition and of the glory of this famous monarch.

They correspond entirely to the itinerary of this famous conqueror of the ancient world, who had crossed from Asia to Thrace over the Hellespont, and had advanced towards the sources of the Istru, which at that time were considered to be at its cataracts.

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VIII. THE GIANT FURROW (BRASDA) OF NOVAC (OSIRIS).
A MONUMENT COMMEMORATING THE INTRODUCTION OF AGRICULTURE.

There still exists in the countries of Dacia an important prehistoric monument, the origin of which, according to folk traditions, is tightly connected with the deeds attributed to Osiris by antiquity.

Along the Romanian –country (TN – Tara Romaneasca, meaning Southern Romania or Valahia) and across the lower part of Moldova, there are still apparent today the traces of a deep furrow (ditch, trench), of an extraordinary length, which cuts in two the plain from between the Carpathians and the Danube.

This huge trench appears in the Mehedinti district, near the great turn of the Danube; it passes over the districts Dolj, Romanati, Olt and Arges, from where, according to folk traditions, goes along Targoviste, Ploiesci and Buzeu, up to Maxineni. This furrow reappears in the western part of Galati, near the hamlet Traian, where it takes the name of "**Troian**", then, taking a north-east direction, crosses the Prut river, goes across Basarabia in two parallel lines, and from Basarabia continues towards southern Russia [1].

[1. According to the accounts we have, the traces of this "Furrow" (Brasda) are still apparent in the following localities: in **Mehedinti** district, on the territory of the villages Hinova, Broscari, Poroinita, Orevita, Padina mare si mica, Corlatel, Dobra, Gvardinita, Balacita, Clenov and Terpedita, where it also exists, as it is told, the earth table and chair of Novac. In **Dolj** district: in the village Bresta, In a suburb of Craiova (**Laurian**, Magazin, II.102), and at the villages Garlesci. In **Romanati** district: at Popanzelesci, Viisora, Dobrun, Parscoveni, Soperlita, Osica-de-sus, Vladuleni, Brancoveni and Greci. In **Olt** district: at the villages Urluieni, Barlog and Negrasi.

In **Dambovita** district: on the territory of the villages Brosceni, Morteni and Puntea-de-Greci. From Puntea-de-Greci this ditch cannot be followed with certainty under the name of "Furrow". On "Charta Daciei Romane" of **Tocilescu** though, the continuity of this furrow is noted "as explored" also at the villages Finta and Manesci (Danbovita district), as well as westwards and eastwards of Ploiesci. At the western part of Galati, this trench begins near the village called "Traian", from where it takes a northern direction; then it turns north-east and passes by Fantanele, through Odaia lui Manolachi and continues to the southern part of the village Tulucesci. In **Basarabia** it appears as two ancient earth trenches or furrows (**troiane**) with a west-east direction.

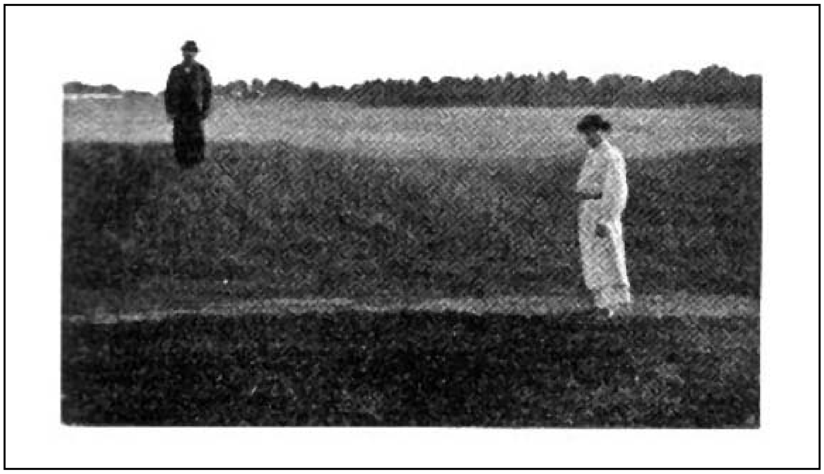
One of these trenches, **troianul de jos** (TN – the lower trench), begins near Prut river at Vadul-lui-Isac, from where, following its eastwards direction, crosses the river Cahul north of Vulcanesci, and the river Ialpug at Tabac (north of Bolgrad), and from here continues at the village Catlabug, passes by the village Troianul-vechi near Chitai lake, cut across the territory of the village Spanscaia and continues to the lake Cunduc, south of the village Borizsovka.

At Troianul-vechi, it is obvious that the excavated earth is thrown **towards south**.

The **second** trench, **troianul de sus** (TN – the upper trench), begins at the north-east part of the town Leova, and continuing its run along the territory of the villages Saracina, Ialpuzel, Blagodati-Gradiesci and Baimaclia, crosses the river Botna above Salcuta, continues north of Causiani and on the territory of the village Ursoia, and it disappears near the village Chircaiesci, south of Bender, near Nistru. This latter line appears with **Cantemir** as a continuation of the trench which comes from the Romanian-country and continues to the Don. In truth, this "troian" from upper Basarabia seems to have once being part of the same line as the "troian" from near Galati, because from the little town Leova (along the lower Prut), to Vadul-lui-Isac from the former district of Cahul, there are also seen the remains of an earth wave (**Arbore**, Basarabia, p.379).

We have to note that in close vicinity with this furrow, which stretches from Mehedinti towards Nistru, there are two localities with the name of "Ursoia", one in Olt district, the other in Basarabia. As **Helanic** tells us (Fragm.154), Osiris had also the name ***"Usiris*** with the Egyptian priests].

Romanian folk traditions call this furrow “**Brasda lui Novac**” (TN – the Furrow of Novac).



The furrow of Ostrea-Novac (Osiris), on the territory of the village **Soparlita** (Romanati district, **Romania**), seen from north towards south. The figure on the right is positioned in the trench, while the other is on top of the Furrow. In the background are a ploughed field and orchards of the village.
(From a photograph from the year 1899).

The traditions about the Furrow tell us that:

“This furrow is made across **the middle of the earth**. It comes right from where **the sun sets** and ends where **the sun rises**. This furrow is made by **Novac, the Emperor of the Jidovi** (TN – Jews), who came out to plough with a big, very big plough, which he pulled with **his own hands**, or it was pulled by **two yoked black buffaloes**, or **two big black oxen**, or two giant white buffaloes, or two oxen with a white line over the middle; that this furrow is made right **through the bed of the river Olt**, and that the water of this river makes even now waves at the place where it hits this earth wave; that this big furrow is made as **an example of how to plough and to provide food**; that it is made for **remembering**, or to keep its memory alive as long as the world and the earth will endure; that **the Romanians have learnt to plough since the time when Novac has made this big furrow**; and that the soil of this furrow is thrown towards south, as a sign that **towards south** we should pray” [2].

[2. The soil excavated from this ditch, being thrown towards south, gives this dug out line the shape of a wide furrow, made from west to east. (The Annals of the Academic Society, Tom.X. 2.p.187).
Similarly, with the Romans, after an ancient agrarian rite, the demarcation line called **decumanus limes** was drawn from west to east (**Lachmanni**, Gromatici veteres, p.108).

These **folk traditions** have a particular importance in regards with the origin and primitive function of this furrow, so we publish them here extensively, as they were communicated to us by the village teachers:
We are told from the village Maldar, **Olt** district: “**Novac** drew this furrow near the village Urluieni from Arges district, and at the village Tampeni from Olt district. This furrow was drawn by Novac with a plough, which he dragged with his own hands. Novac and Iorgovan were friends. Novac, it is told, was the **emperor of the Jidovi** (giants), the big people”.

From the village Visina, **Vlasca** district: “At the village Brosceni in **Dambovita** district, upstream of the river Nejlov, can be seen the traces of a big plow furrow, long and wide. The elders of the village say about this furrow: Novac came out to plough, with a big, very big plough, pulled by 12 oxen with big horns, with tall legs and gigantic power … He ploughed in length and width. He had a very beautiful daughter, called **Sorina**”.
From the village Vertop, **Dolj** district: “The **Furrow of the Troian**, drawn by **Novac**, helped by a nephew from sister and a nephew from brother. This furrow is drawn on the middle of the earth from the sundown to the sunrise. The trench made by this plough is as an **example how to plough and provide food**, and the furrow thrown to the right means that to the right we should worship”.
From the village Slobozia-Mandra in **Teleorman** district: “There is the furrow of Novac. The elders tell that this furrow was made **for remembrance**, by a brave man, called Novac, with a plough pulled by two buffaloes. About Novac it is also told that he fought with a gigantic serpent until he defeated it”.
From the village Odobesci, **Dambovita** district: “It is told that a furrow might have been made by Novac, with a plough with two oxen, from the **sunrise towards the sunset**, to be **for remembrance, as long as the world and the earth will endure**”.
From the village Galiciuica, **Dolj** district: “The Romanians, it is told, have learnt to plough since Novac has made the big furrow …”

In an incantation from **Dolj** district, published in the magazine “Romanian Youth”, Vol.II.p.218, it is said:

A **big, black man** rose …. made a big, black plough,
Yoked **two big, black oxen**, drew a **big, black furrow** …

Apis and **Mnevis**, the two bulls consecrated to Osiris, which, according to Egyptian traditions, helped him to plough the earth, were black (**Herodotus**, III. 29; **Plutarch**, Is. C. 34).

From the village Clenov, **Mehedinti** district: “This giant (Novac) began to draw a furrow through the navel of the earth. He yoked two buffaloes to the plough, a maiden drove them, and he hold the horns of the plough. He started to draw the furrow from the **sundown to the sunrise**. When the sun was at noon, he had reached with his plough near Tarpezita, where he stopped to eat, and this place is called until today “**the tables**”. Novac asked the musicians to play for him at the hill of Cinghir (that was the name of the musician), which is east of Tarpezita”.

Diodorus Siculus (I.18) writes: “Osiris was a lover of feasts, he liked **music and dances**. So, he took with him in the expedition a troupe of musicians, among who were also nine maidens adept at singing”.

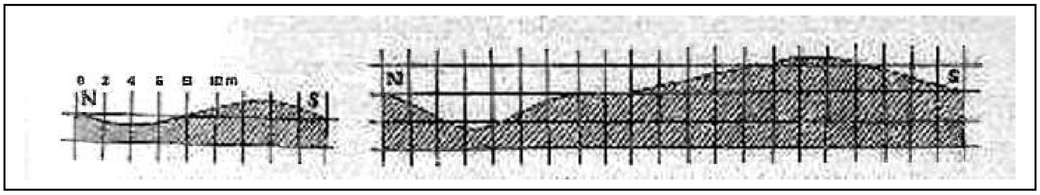
We also find the following tradition in the collection of **Odobescu** (Dosare archeologice, jud. Olt. P.487): “The trench, the furrow of Novac, is made with two oxen, at the time of the Jidovs”.

A.Treb. Laurian writes regarding this legendary furrow: “One of the peasants answered me: **Ler emperor, when he passed from the sundown towards the sunrise, drew this furrow with the plough**; others say that he drew it with **the spear**, and that it stretches eastwards right to Jerusalem” (Magazin istoric, II.p.102).

About this “**Ler emperor**” we hear the following important tradition from the village Avramesci, **Tutova** district: “**Lerui Domne**” was a great emperor from **the Sunrise**, who had crossed many countries and seas until he arrived here with countless armies, but evil and disobedient, so that wherever they passed they left only seas of tears; they were so evil with the **Romanians**, but God took their minds, and they **ran wherever they could**, until they gathered back together, one by one, there, far away, in the country of **Relian**”.

With the Greeks, in mysteries and religious rites, Osiris figured also under the name of **Dionysos** (**Herodotus**, II.144). And with the Romans, this Diosysos had the name of **Liber pater** (**Macrobius**, Saturn. I.18). So, “**Ler emperor**”, known by the Romans under the name of “**Liber pater**”, was the same legendary figure of Osiris of the Egyptians].

The width and depth of this furrow or trench varies today, depending on the different locations where its traces can still be seen.



The profile of the **Troian** or the **Furrow of Novac** (From Archaeol.– epigr. Mitth. IX Jahrg. p.212, 216).

At the point where it crosses the Roman road, which goes along the banks of the river Olt, towards Turnul-rosu (**Vladuleni**)

On the territory of the village **Tulucesci**, north of the city of Galati.

In some places, as the country teachers report, around 1871 its width was 9 feet, and the height of the earth on the side of the ditch was almost 6 feet (The Annals of the Academic Society, Tom. X. Sect.II.p.336).

According to **Laurian** (Magazin, II.103), this trench had in some parts of Oltenia a width of 8 steps. In the Olt district "the furrow of Novac has in many places a width of over 2.00m and a height of 1.50m" (**Alesandrescu** and **Sfintescu**, Dict. Geogr. Jud. Olt, p.157).

On the territory of the village Soparlita in Romanati district, where I have examined in person, in 1899, the shape and dimensions of this furrow, the bottom of the ditch has a width of 4.25m, its depth is 0.60m and the height of the excavated earth is 0.48m. A little further east, at the village Vladuleni near the village Greci, this furrow has been measured in 1885 by the German archaeologist **Schuhhardt** (Walle und Chausseen im sudlichen und ostlichen Dacien, in Archaeol.-epigr.Mitth. Jahrg.IX p.212). Here the depth of the ditch was 1.00m, and the height of the earth thrown out was 0.80m.

Prince **Dimitrie Cantemir**, Domn (TN – Ruler of a Romanian principality) of Moldova, seduced more by the name of "**Troian**" which all ancient ditches and earth waves bear in Moldova, names this furrow "**fossa Trajani imperatoris**". This ditch, says he, as I myself saw with my eyes, begins in the Hungarian country at Petrovaradin (TN – near today Novi-Sad in Yugoslavia) in the shape of two waves, then it descends and enters in the Romanian-country at the Iron Gates, and from here continues as a single wave over all the Romanian-country, crosses the Siret river at the village called Traian and the Botna river at the village called Causiani (Basarabia), then goes along the whole of Tartaria and ends at the river Tanais (Don); finally, he says that in his time (around 1716), this ditch was 12 ells deep, from which, says he, we can suppose that the size of this ditch at the time of its building, could have been twice as wide and deep (Descriptio Moldaviae, p.23).

In order to realize though the age and the original character of this furrow, a special importance is presented by Romanian folk traditions. According to these historical reminiscences preserved in the countries of ancient Dacia, this trench represents by its size "a gigantic plough furrow, drawn

by a great emperor of the Jidovi (ancient Egyptians), as **example of how to plough and provide food,** and as **remembrance** as long as the world and earth will endure".

The origin of this furrow goes back therefore to the primitive times of human civilization, when for the first time, on the extensive plains, occupied by pastoral tribes, agriculture was introduced in an official and solemn form, although the beginnings of agricultural activity had been much older with the Pelasgian people.

Basically, this folk tradition agrees wholly with the accounts of the ancient writers about the life and deeds of Osiris, who, wishing to facilitate the mode of subsistence of the human genus, had wandered through Asia and Europe accompanied by a powerful army, teaching the people everywhere to cultivate the wheat, barley and to plant the grape vine.

To Osiris was attributed in antiquity the discovery of the first type of plough. It was said that he drew the first furrows and that he was the first one to throw the seed of the cereals in the still virgin earth (**Tibulus**, Eleg. Lib. I.7.v.29).

The trench or the furrow of Osiris is mentioned even in the ancient papyri laid together with the Egyptian mummies. Osiris, these hieroglyphic manuscripts tell us, is the one who "has opened **the trench** in the region of the **north** and the region of the **south**", words which in Egyptian theology meant the vast territories from the northern and southern parts of the Mediterranean (**Pierre**t, Le livre des morts des anciens Egyptiens. Ch. CXLII).

From a historical point of view, the fact is positive that this huge earth construction had existed on the territory of Dacia and at the north of the Black Sea much earlier than the time when Roman domination had reached these parts. One of the principal Roman roads, which connected the center of Dacia to lower Mesia, namely the line Celei-Turnul Rosu-Apul, passes by the village Vladuleni in Romanati district, across the body of this furrow. This important military road, built incontestably at the time of Emperor Trajan, appears therefore to be a later work than the furrow which it crosses.

We find an ante-Roman tradition about the furrow of Osiris from the north of the Black Sea, in ancient Greek literature.

Even in the times of **Herodotus** (lib.IV.c.3), existed in the **Crimean peninsula** an ancient trench, long and wide, which stretched from the Tauric mountains to the Meotic lake. Herodotus also mentions some ancient **earth waves** in **Scythia**, called of the **Cimmerians** IV.c.12).

So the folk tradition communicated by **Stephanos Byzanthinos** (*Taurike*), that Osiris yoked one or two oxen and ploughed the earth of this peninsula, referred to this prehistoric trench of Crimea.

Finally, the ancient furrow of **Scythia** is also mentioned in the Sibylline oracles.

We find the following in a text written by a Jew from Egypt around 160bc about the **Erythrean Sybil**: "And there will be shown again to people tremendous and terrible omens, because the deep river **Tanais** (Don) will leave the Meotic lake, and **in its deep bed will be seen the trace of**

the fruit furrow” (**Friedlieb**, Oracula Sibyllina, lib.III.v.337-340). Here the Sibyl mentions in a prophetic form an old folk belief, that a miraculous furrow passed through the deep bed of the river Tanais, tradition similar to the Romanian legend about this gigantic furrow of the ancient world, which crosses right through the bed of the river Olt, which even today makes big waves at the place where it hits this earth wave.

When prince Cantemir tells us therefore in Descriptio Moldaviae, that the ancient and long trench stretched from the Romanian-country, Moldova and Basarabia, to the river Tanais, he is communicating exactly the folk tradition which existed in his times.

The reign of Osiris and of his first successors over the northern regions of the Danube and the Black Sea appears, from the old texts of Egyptian theology, as well as from the traces of Osiric religion in these northern parts, as a real historical fact. It wasn't a simple fiction of the Egyptian priests. The cult of Osiris appears spread out over a big part of eastern and central Europe, even in very remote ante-historical times.

The **Scythians**, as **Herodotus** tells us, worshiped Apollo, or the god of the sun, under the name **Oetosyros** (lib.IV c.59). This Oetosyr-os, by his name, as well as by his divine character, was none else than Osiris, “the god of light”, Osiris, “the one with the white crown on his head, who ordered the sun's travel”, “Osiris, the sun god”.

Archaic and deep traces of Osiric religion appear also in the lands of ancient **Germany**.

Tacitus, the great Roman historian, relates the following important fact, when describing the mores of the German tribes: “A part of the **Svevi**” (or the Germans who dwelt between Elba and Vistula), writes he, “still sacrifice to the goddess Isis. But, which are the events and which is the origin of this foreign cult, I could not find out, only this, that the statue of this goddess is figured in the shape of a little boat, which shows us that this religion has been brought from across the sea” (Germania, c.9). He only says this. But he could have added that, wherever evident traces of the worship of the goddess Isis exist, a cult of Osiris should have existed also, these two divinities appearing always together.

In truth, the thorough research made in our century by the renowned German philologist and writer **Iacob Grimm**, on the ante-Christian German divinities and beliefs, has reached the conclusion that in a very obscure antiquity the German peoples worshiped a divinity of the sun, or of the light, under the name of **Ostara** or **Ostar**, word, which by its origin is not German.

The Germans celebrated the principal feast day of this divinity in spring and it had become so popular with all the German nationalities, that the fathers of the Christian Catholic church could not suppress, despite their apostolic zeal, from the list of German holy days, the pagan name of **Ostara** or **Ostar** (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, 267).

The Germans call even today the Christian Easter, which is celebrated in April or at the end of March, **Oster** and **Ostern**. And we have to note that the great feasts of Osiris, his marriage with Isis, and the finding of the body of this worshiped king of the ancient world, "God of the sun", were celebrated in antiquity around the beginning of spring.

In **Greece**, the cult of Osiris also appears as an inheritance from very obscure times.
Apart from Apollo, the Pelasgian god of light, and apart from Uranos, Saturn and Gaea, one of the great figures of ante-Olympic Greek religion was **Dionysos**, and this Dionysos of the Greeks, as **Herodotus** himself acknowledges, was the same divinity as Osiris (lib. II. c.144).

In **Crete**, the dominant religion in prehistoric times was that of ***Zeus asterios***, who represented the Lord of the sky, the sun and the stars, and the symbol of this Cretan divinity was a bull (**Preller**, Griech. Myth. II, 1854, p.80). Similarly in Egyptian religion Apis was consecrated to Osiris, and venerated as the image of this divinity of the sun. The origin of this Cretan religion, characterized by the sacred name of ***Zeus asterios***, was therefore connected to the cult of Osiris, the personification of light, according to the Egyptian doctrines.

In **Dacia**, the memory of the expedition and deeds of Osiris has been preserved in traditions and legends. But Osiris, the king of the Egyptians, did not have a particular cult with the Pelasgian population of Dacia. In the historical memories of this country, he has neither the role of Oetosyros from the north of the Black Sea, nor that of Ostara or Ostar from the ante-Christian religion of the Germans. He is only a simple "emperor of the Jidovi" (or the Egypto-Semites), a foreign hero, arrived from the southern countries, without divine attributes and without worship [3].

[3. **Novac** or **Ostrea-Novac**, the emperor of the Jidovi, who, according to legends, fought with the dragon and made the great furrow, is a prehistoric personality entirely distinct from "**Novac the old**", or "**Mos Novac**", celebrated so much in our heroic songs, who was by origin from "**those old Latins**" (**Corcea**, Folk ballads, p.81,90). We will talk about "old Novac" in the chapters relating to the first Pelasgian empire. In some parts of Romania, especially in Oltenia, the word **Novac** has also the meaning of "**giant**", or "**brave man from the ancient times**".

In Slavic languages though, "**novac**" means **young** (**Hasdeu**, Marele Dictionar, II.2262). But the origin of the work is not Slav. In modern Italian language "**novell**" or "**nouvell**" means also "**young**", or "**recently born**" (**Banfi**, Vocabolario Milanese-Italiano).

In ancient Greek legends, **Saturn** had also the epithet ***neotatos***, **the youngest** (**Apollodorus**, lib.I.1.8; **Hesiod**, Theog.v.132). Also as ***neotatoi*** were considered by Greeks **Hercules, Dionysos** (Osiris) and **Pan** (**Herodotus**, II. 145). The Greek epithet ***neotatos*** seems therefore to be only a translation of an archaic folk form of **novac**.
In Roman nomenclature, the name of Novac appears in a literary form as **Novatus** (**Suetonius Augustus** c.51).

We must state here also that Novac of the Romanian legends has nothing to do with Noe (Noah), the Jewish Deucalion, although the Hebrew tradition has borrowed for its Noah some attributes from the legend of Osiris, like the planting of the grape vine].

One of the most glorious events of the prehistoric epoch was the introduction of agriculture.

To this great event in the life of mankind, as Romanian folk traditions tell us, is connected the wide furrow, of an extraordinary length, whose traces are still apparent today on the plains of Romania, southern Russia and Hungary; a furrow which, by its character, was made by Ostrea-Novac as an example of how to plough and to provide food, and as remembrance for all future generations [4].

[4. In **Hungary** there are also numerous traces of earth waves and ancient trenches, whose origin has remained unknown to this day. Part of these earth constructions appear in the documents of Hungary under the name of "**Brasda**" (furrow). In a document from 1086 (Cod. Dipl. Arpadianus cont.I.p.32) is mentioned a "**Brasda lui Buheu**", which passed on the periphery of the counties Iaurin, Vesprim and Castrul-de-fer. Other **two prehistoric trenches** of Hungary, which folk traditions also consider as being **gigantic plough furrows**, appear on the fertile and extensive plains between the Danube and the Tisa. One of these primitive constructions begins near Godollo, northeast of Pesta, takes an eastern direction and passes by the villages Sz.Laszlo, Fenszaru, Tarna-Sz.-Miklos and continues to K.Kore near Tisa. A second line, parallel with the former, was observed on the territory of Heves county (Arok-Szallas-Dormand). Both these trenches are called by the Hungarian people **Csorsz** or **Cszosz-arka**.

According to the folk traditions from Hungary, the ditch called Csorsz-arka, which passes through the counties Borsod and Heves, forms a **ploughed furrow**, which has been made with a gigantic plough (**Gyarfas**, A Iasz-Kunok tortenete, I.p.564).

The name Csorsz-arka of these two trenches has remained unexplained to this day in historical literature. Hungarian traditions attribute the origin of these trenches to a national hero called **Csorsz, Curz** or **Curzan** (**Romer**, Mouvement archeologique, p.39).

This name though belongs incontestably to prehistoric times. One of the ancient cities of Pannonia, situated at about the place where today is Royal Alba, had in the Roman epoch the name of **Herculia**, probably because some old remains of trenches, furrows, canals or roads existed there, which tradition attributed to Hercules. The same city, Herculia, appears in **Itinerarium Antonini** (Ed. Parthey, p.124) with the name **Gorsio sive Hercule**, and the variants **gorcio, gursio, cursio** and **corsio**.

The furrow from the Bretagne peninsula. At the north-west corner of France (**Aremorica** during Roman times), stretches from south-east to north-west a long chain of hills, bearing the enigmatic name of **Sillon de Bretagne**, meaning the furrow of Bretagne.

Probably a folk tradition, similar to that from Romania and Hungary, about a giant furrow, had once existed there, and maybe still exists today. In the district Romanati (Romania), on the territory of the village Dobrun, the furrow attributed to Novac is made also across a hill (Annal. Soc. Acad. X.2.187). And in the extreme western corner of this Bretagne peninsula there is the city and port called **Brest**. Also in Oltenia (Dolj district, Romania), a village near which the furrow of Novac passes, is called **Bresta**.

It is probable that the origin of the name of the locality Brest from Bretagne peninsula is reduced to an archaic Pelasgian word, **brasda** or **bresta** (**bresda** in Transilvania). We still note here that a gulf near the city Brest bears the name of **Canal d'Is**, probably a port dedicated to the goddess Isis in ancient times, as we also find ***'Isiachon limen*** at the north-west corner of the Black Sea (Anonymi Periplus, 61), **Isidis portus** on the shores of Ethiopia (**Pliny** lib.V.34.5), the village called **Isalnita**, situated near the furrow of Novac in Romania, and **Vadul-lui-Isac** near the Troian or Brasda Basarabiei.

The Furrow (**Brasda**) **in Italy**. In Italy also existed an antique tradition about a gigantic furrow made on the fertile plains of the river Pad. Here though this furrow was attributed to **Hercules**, exactly as in some parts of Oltenia the furrow of Novac bears also the name of "**brasda lui Iorgovan**" (**Spineanu**, Dict. Geogr. al jud. Mehedinti p.46. 112)].

By examining the primitive conditions of human society in those times, the furrow attributed to Ostrea Novac or Osiris, appears to have had also a social-economic function.

The beginnings of agriculture were in fact much older than the times of Osiris. Even towards the end of the Quaternary epoch the importance of the cereals, especially wheat and barley, had become known to the human genus. The progress of this new branch of activity of mankind had remained though very limited during the Neolithic epoch. In those primitive times of history, the big and powerful class of the population, especially in Europe, was formed by the pastoral tribes. To this social hierarchy of the ancient times was added a new circumstance though. The whole Neolithic epoch is characterized by an extraordinary multiplication of the population, and there existed a big inequality in possessions.

Saturn, the father of Osiris, had already begun the big task of reforming the human social life. Under the reign of this wise monarch, the matter of agriculture was considered for the first time as a state affair. Saturn appears as the person who **introduced and protected the whole agricultural activity**, and he bears with the Pelasgian populations the title of **the beginner of a better way of life** (**Macrobius**, Saturn.I.7).

But under Osiris appears for the first time in the history of humankind **the great agrarian matter of the ancient world,** the necessity that the state should ameliorate the situation of the poor, who lacked possessions and were not part of the pastoral class.

Apart from this economic reason, under the reign of Osiris appears also the fight for power, or for ethnic domination, between the two groups of enemy populations, the southern races and the northern Pelasgians, from the lands of Europe.

The possession of land in those remote prehistoric times was concentrated mainly in the hand of the Pelasgian race. Even from the beginning of the Neolithic epoch, the Pelasgian pastoral tribes, crossing rivers and mountains, had spread with their infinite flocks over all the lands of Ellada, of western Asia, and in Egypt, right to the upper parts of the Nile, and with the possession of land their national power also grew.

Osiris appears in the history of the ancient world as the first Egyptian king who started the fight against the territorial domination of the Pelasgian pastoral tribes, who had occupied the mountains and plains right to the deserts of Africa. After the successful war with Typhon, Osiris, empowered by victory and conquest, wrested away from the vast domains of the pastoral tribes extensive uncultivated territories, and distributed them to the farmers.

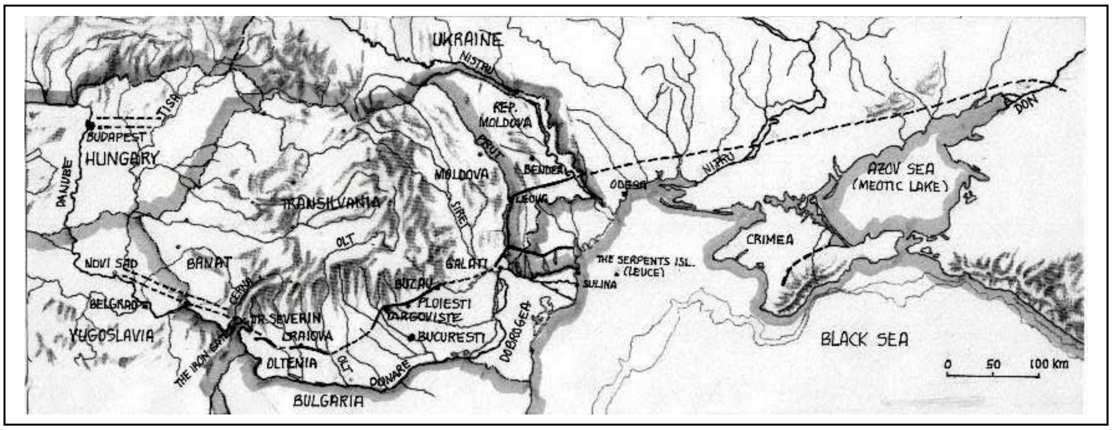
We can conclude therefore that the primitive function of the furrow attributed to Osiris had at the same time a character of public usefulness; it served to mark in a visible and durable way the land distributed to the class of the farmers. This explains why this furrow is drawn in various agricultural regions, and sometimes even on the crests of the hills.

These are the principal political and economical events of the epoch of Osiris.

We summarize, saying that this furrow, to which all the ancient and new traditions attribute an agricultural character, constitutes, by its age, as well as by its special importance, one of the most memorable prehistoric monuments of Europe [5].

[5. The physical execution of this huge furrow, as with all the big and difficult works in prehistoric times, was most definitely done by an enormous multitude of **public slaves**.
In Romania, this ditch bears also in some places the name of "**Brasda jidoveasca**", meaning, executed by Jidovi (**Locusteanu**, Dict. Geogr. al jud. Romanati, p.137). Also, the wide trench in the Tauric peninsula, which was attributed to Osiris by some historical traditions (**Herodotus**,IV.3; **Stephanus Byzanthinus**, ***Tauriche***; **Tab. Peut**.), it was considered to have been made by slaves.

This earth work called "Brasda lui Novac" **doesn't have at all the character of a Roman earth wall**, regularly built and fortified with castra. As for the nature of the terrain on which this furrow passes, it has no defensive importance at all].



(TN – I take the liberty to add a map sketch with the location of the furrows / ditches, trenches/ as given. The two upper and lower "troiane" in Basarabia - today the Republic of Moldova – are still shown on some maps – see the British Encyclopedia Atlas).

Table of Contents

THE MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS OF DACIA

IX. MENHIRS, THEIR CHARACTER AND DESTINATION

Another important class of prehistoric monuments, which appear in various parts of Asia, Europe and Africa, are the so-called **megalithic monuments**.

These monuments consist of big, rough stones, cut or sculpted in a wholly primitive way, which astonish us not because of their esthetic shape, but because of their grandiosity.

The most archaic type of these megalithic monuments consists of a single huge stone rock, thrust vertically into the earth. These rough monoliths, so placed by the hands of prehistoric man, are called in today archaeology **menhirs** or **peulvans** (**De Mortillet**, Musee prehistorique, pl LIX) [1].

[1. The etymology of the word **menhir** according to **Littre** (Dictionnaire de la langue francaise) is from Bas-Bret. **men**, stone, **hir**, long. In the ancient Breton language, as **Legrand d'Aussy**, the first person who established a classification of the megalithic monuments, the rough obelisks were called **armenir** (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, p.169; **Reinach**, Terminologie des monuments megalithiques, p.6). With the Germans, **Ermen-sul**, **Irmen-sul**, **Ormen-sul** was called the idol of the Saxons, a short wooden roll (TN – sul) or column (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, p.106). In France, as Cartailhac writes (Ibid.p.319), the most considerable menhir is at Locmariaker in the department Morbihan, called "**la Pierre des fees**" (TN – the stone of the fairies) or "**la grande pierre**" (TN – the big stone). Today this menhir is overturned and broken in three pieces. Its length is 21m and its thickness is 4m)].

The shapes of the menhirs are pyramidal, cylindrical, often with conical peaks. Or, in other words, they are just simple columns of rough stone or primitive obelisks.

Opinions today are divided regarding the original destination of these rough stone columns.

Some believe that the so-called menhirs are just a kind of **funerary monuments**, erected on the graves or cenotaphs of the deceased. Others, on the contrary, based on the fact that at the foot of these monoliths has never been discovered any trace of inhumation, assert that the menhirs constitute only simple commemorative monuments, destined in a remote antiquity to perpetuate the memory of a great event. Finally, a part of the archaeologists of today generally consider them only as a symbol of a religious cult from prehistoric epochs.

We will explain here the primitive destination which these prehistoric monuments had, not on the basis of medieval sources, as has been mainly the custom so far, but exclusively by the religious character which these monoliths had in the most remote times of Greek and Roman antiquity.

On the vast plain of Troy, as **Homer** tells us (Iliad, XI, v.371), there was a big mound from ancient times, where was buried the divine old man **Ilus**, the son of Dardanos, and on this mound was erected a stele or funerary stone column.

During the war of the Trojans with the Greeks, as Homer also tells us (Ibid. XVI, v.457.674), the brave prince **Sarpedon**, ruler over the wealthy Pelasgian population from **Lycia**, falls in battle killed by Patroclus, and his body, by order of Jove, was carried to Lycia, so that his brothers and

relatives could celebrate his funerals and erect a mound with a column (***stele***) on it, because this is **the honor of the dead**. Ulysses also, according to the **Odyssey** (lib. XII, v.13-14), erects in the island Aeaea a tumulus over the ashes and weapons of the dead Elpenor, and on top of the tumulus he erects a column (stele).

It results that even at the time of the Trojan war, stone columns appear as monuments erected on the tumuli of the deceased, for their eternal honor.

Along the road from Sparta to Arcadia, **Pausanias** tells us (Descriptio Graeciae lib III, 20.9), could still be seen even in his time seven columns or posts (***chiones***) fashioned in the archaic style, or of rough stone, and these columns represented the simulacra of the seven planets, the Sun, Moon, Saturn, Jove, Mars, Mercury and Venus.

Finally, the primitive columns, or of rough stone, also appear in prehistoric antiquity as commemorative monuments.

Hercules, the great hero of the Pelasgian world, erects, as traditions tell, near the Gaditan ocean (TN – near Gades) two huge stone columns, as monuments, intended to commemorate his expedition and his great deeds (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. I. 24. 1;IV. 18.2).

In Italy, the custom to erect pyramids or huge stone columns on the graves of the deceased, also existed until relatively late times with the ancient Latin tribes. “With our forefathers” writes **Servius**, “the nobles were buried under tall mounds, or in the mountains, from where the custom arose to erect pyramids, or huge stone columns, over the body of the deceased” (Cf. **Isidori Hispal**, Originum, lib. XV. 11. 4).

So, according to the moral customs of antiquity, the menhirs or rough stone columns served various purposes. Some appear as primitive honorary monuments, raised on the tumuli, or at the graves of the deceased. Others had a higher, religious purpose. They represented in a rudimentary form, the images of some archaic divinities, and formed therefore the object of a religious cult. And finally, others appear only as simple commemorative monuments regarding expeditions, illustrious war deeds, or great political and religious events. These stone columns had at the same time a religious-economic purpose. They served as “termini” or sacred stones, used to mark territorial limits and to indicate the direction of the roads (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib.IX. 1.6).

In prehistoric antiquity the menhirs had everywhere the same sacred function as **the cross** had and has in the Christian era, as a sign of worship, as sepulchral monument and as a holy object of commemoration.

The use of menhirs as funerary monuments also existed in the countries of **Dacia**, until late in historical times. Romanian folk traditions mention even today the boulders of stone which were placed near graves, as eternal memorials of the deceased [2].

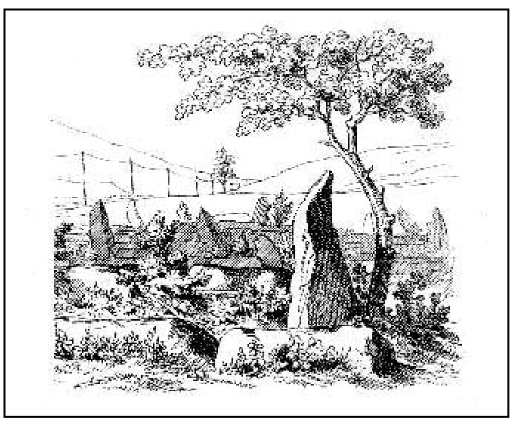
[2. In medieval historical documents of Hungary, the columns of rough stone from the ancient times are called **balvan** (**Cod.dip. Arpadianus continuatus**, VIII. 174. y. 1267), word whose origin is the Romanian **bolovan** (TN – stone boulder), identical in form and meaning with the archaic term from France, **peulvan**. **Kovary** writes in “Szaz tortenelmi regek” p.105 about **a huge funerary column** in

archaic style, or menhir. He says: In the forest called Rica from the Secui region of Transilvania, it can be seen near the road which crosses this forest, **a huge stone boulder** (bolovan), 18 feet high, which is called "**Petra Ricei**" (TN – the Stone of Rica). Here, the people say, was buried a queen, whose citadel was on the hill which rises above this valley].

In some parts of Romania have existed right to our times entire prehistoric cemeteries called by the people **the graves of the Giants, of the Jidovi, of the Dacians** or **of the Lazi**, graves which were indicated by big and unmarked boulders (**Spineanu**, Dictionar geogr. al jud. Mehedinti, p.166; **Filip**, Study of military geography of Oltenia, p.76) [3].

[3. From the village Radauti, Dorohoi district, we are told: "It is known from our forefathers that on the estate Miorcani, at the boundary with Radauti, were buried **Dacians**, **Sasi** or **Lazi** and that on those graves ….the stones were **big and unmarked**".
In the western parts of Europe, the funerary columns were called in medieval Latin **staplus** (**Lex Salica** – Tit. LVII.3). This word is explained by **Baluzius** (Capitularia, II.p.687) as "**lapis**", ***stele***, column, Slavonic **stlepe**, Rom. **stalp** (TN – post). It is incontestable that this word has been in use in Europe even before the immigration of the Slavs. Some villages in Romania bear the name "**Stalp**", from the stone columns which had been erected there in ancient times].

In **Serbia**, the cemeteries which are characterized by their ancient age and by huge boulders or stone slabs, are called "**the graves of the Latins or of the Jidovs**", name under which the folk traditions of the southern Slavs understand two generations of giant men, who were distinguished by their size and physical strength, and by their large and heavy constructions (**Kanitz**, Donau-Bulgarien I. 51;III. 75). The vast necropolis with menhirs from the village **Balwan**, situated north of Alexinati in Serbia is an example (**Kanitz**, Reise in Sud-Serbien, p.33).

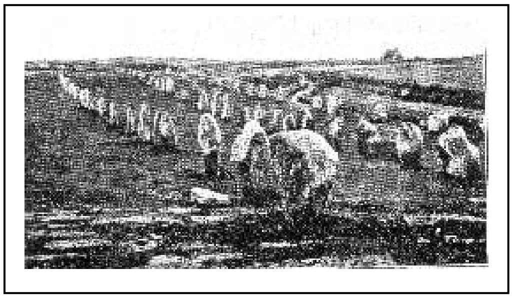


The graves of the "**Latins**" and the "**Jidovs**", near the village **Balwan** (Bovan), north of Alexinati in **Serbia**.
(From **Kanitz**, Reise in Sud-Serbien, pag. 33 and tab. III. fig. 3.

The megalithic monuments called menhirs are usually **isolated**, but sometimes they are placed in **groups**. When these groups are in the shape of circles, they are called **cromlechs**, and when they are placed more or less in straight lines, are called **alignments** [4].

[4. The most remarkable alignments in **France** are at **Carnac** in Bretagne. These alignments consist of three groups separated from each other by some space, but forming the same megalithic system. These groups are: the alignment from **Menec**, composed of 11 lines which contain 878 menhirs, 3-4m

high; the one from **Kermario**, of 10 lines containing 855 menhirs, and finally the one from **Kerlescant** of 13 lines, containing 262 menhirs. The direction of these lines is from east to west. The boulders are placed regularly, at small intervals, and their dimensions reduce gradually towards the ends of the lines. These monuments date from before the first invasions of the Celts, and their prehistoric destination is still a mystery].



Part of the **menhir alignment** of Carnac (dept. Morbihan in France). (From Revue encyclopedique, 1895, p.187)

To which race belong in general the monuments called megalithic, has remained an open question to this day.

For a long time these enormous monuments of rough stone, and especially the dolmens, have been considered, without any reason, as being made by the **Celts** or the **Druids**.

In fact the origin of the megalithic monuments goes back to the first times of the Neolithic epoch. A significant quantity of objects of polished stone was found in various occasions, especially in dolmens, incontestable proof that the introduction of this type of funerary monuments antedates the immigration of the Celts to Europe.

(**Bertrand**, Archeologie celtique et gauloise: (TN) – “We cannot hesitate to declare that **the dolmens are not Celtic**, and that they conceal the remains of a population about which history does not speak” (**Fergusson**, Les monuments megalitiques, p.XXVIII) [5].

[5. **Dolmens**. Another group of megalithic monuments bear in prehistoric archaeology the name of **dolmens** (Etymology according to **Littre**, gael/**tol**, table, **men**, stone). The dolmens are **funerary** monuments and consist of a huge stone slab or table placed horizontally on two or more big boulders, thrust vertically in the ground. The size of the slabs and the boulders is usually so enormous, and their transportation and lifting present such great difficulties, that we are astonished today when we contemplate them, and we ask ourselves how those primitive people could dispose of such efficacious mechanical means, in order to move these gigantic masses of stone, to bring them often from a big distance and to lift them on hills or mounds, in order to place them at their destined place. Inside them, these dolmens contain one or several **stone rooms**, in which were laid the bodies, or the urns with the ashes of the deceased. They exist in a more considerable number in France, Britain, Denmark, Sweden and north Germany. Also it has been ascertained the existence of this type of monuments in Italy, in the north-eastern parts of the Caucas, in Persia, India, Arabia, in the northern regions of Africa and in Central America.

In **Romania**, the only dolmen about which we have some archaeological notes is the construction of huge boulders, or the artificial cave from the mountain **Lespedea** (TN – the Slab), from the sources of Ialomita, about which **Cesar Boliac** writes: “To give an idea to the archaeologists about the first aspect of this cave, I recommend them the drawing “the **Danish dolmen**” and the circle of sepulchral stones, from the fine work “Man before history” of Sir John Lubbock ….
In truth, one is facing here **the building of a giant**; in truth, man must have been strong in his arms and back, to be able to grab, to lay, to build, such a dwelling in such a place …Over big stones, a huge stone slab forms a roof over **two rooms**, one of 15 feet long and 8 feet wide, with an **entrance** and an

> opposite **exit** of 7 hands high and 3 hands wide; large boulders as **thresholds** and as **steps** to descend inside. Entering this room through the west opening, on the right is a **square stone block**, surely an **altar**, 4 hands high and as many on each side. On this altar there were ashes and pottery shards, mixed with a sort of sand … This explains the name of this place, "**Pesterea cu olele**" (TN – the Cave with the pots) … I took some of these shards, all blackish and whitened on the outside (characteristic **Dacian** pottery, although called **Celtic** by the antiquarians) … the whitish substance on these pots is doubtless the exhaled lime from the ashes. I have observed this in several occasions. Tradition says that there are old men who have still seen many whole pots, there were **some on three legs** and of various sizes ….Pots … which have served as urns …. Near this room and separated by a wall formed by a single stone block, is another smaller room … without altar …" (Trompeta Carpatilor nr. 846, 1870).
> In another article, **C.Boliac** confirms again the dolmenic character of this artificial cave: "I have no doubt that the dolmen which I found last year, with the name of Pesterea cu olele …. **is not druido-celtic** (Trompeta Carpatilor, nr. 939, 1871).
> About **another megalithic monument** with the appearance of a dolmen, we have received the following communication from the village **Chiscani**, Braila district: "In the mountains of Macin there are three stones, two of which are thrust in the ground, and the third is placed in between them, without touching the ground"].

Irish traditions connect the origin of megalithic monuments to two prehistoric invasionary peoples. One of these races, the oldest, has in Irish traditions the name **Fri – Bolgi**, and they are shown as men of a normal height, with brown or dark hair.

This people, who had hold for a while the ethnic and political rule over Ireland, was later overrun by another race of peoples, the so-called **Danians**, who had a generally tall stature, blond hair and blue eyes (**Henri Martin**, De l'origine des monuments megalithiques, p.14).

The Danians, according to Irish traditions, continued to use, like the Fri-Bolgi had done, the megalithic monuments, up to the time when their domination over Ireland was overturned by another invasionary people called **Scots**.

From the point of view of prehistoric ethnology, the Fri-Bolgi, who, according to Irish traditions have first introduced the megalithic funerary monuments in the western countries of Europe, appear to have been only a migrated branch towards west of the big Pelasgian people of the **Hyperboreans**, settled in prehistoric times at the Lower Danube, and who in the monuments of antique geography appear under the name of **Pirobori** (Ptolemy,Geogr.lib.III.10.8– **Piroboridava** near the river Hierasus, Siret).

The country of the Hyperboreans from the north of the Lower Danube was renowned even during the epoch of Pindar for its colossal monuments of rough stone.

And the second prehistoric race, the so-called **Danians**, mentioned by the Irish traditions, they appear to have been, in the great ethnic movement of the ancient world, just some tribes of **Danai** (***Danaoi***), as **Homer** calls the Greeks (Iliad, III. 33.464; IV. 232; VII.382; XIII. 680), who had advanced westwards, on the migration routes of other Neolithic Pelasgian tribes. These Danai, or Greeks, appear in the primitive times of European history as the people who immediately follow the Pelasgians.

About the immigration of the Danai in Pelasgian territories, there was preserved until late a tradition in Ellada, which **Eschyl** presents in his poem "Supplices": Danaos (the representative of

the Danai), persecuted by his brother Aegyptos, emigrates from Lybia to the vast empire of Pelasg, to ask for protection and a place to settle.
Even the ethnic type of the Fri-Bolgi and Danians of the Irish traditions, wholly corresponds to the physical and moral aspect of the ancient Pelasgians and the Danai.
Pelasgians appear in the ancient monuments of Greek literature as a race of men with a darkish color, or suntanned, robust and with a dominating character. Pelasg, the founder of the empire of this race was, as the ancient poet **Asius** (cca 700bc) tells us, born from **the black earth**.
On the other hand, the ancient Greeks, or Danai, are shown in the traditions of the Homeric epoch, as men with a tall stature, blond hair and blue eyes.

Finally, the signs and figures engraved on various megalithic monuments of the west, which consist of spirals, serpentine lines, arched lines or semispherical, disks, wheels of the sun and scattered points, which imitate the sky with the stars, present a remarkable affinity with the system of ornamentation and the symbolic signs of the eastern Pelasgians.
These mystical characters from the funerary megalithic monuments of the west show us the traces of Pelasgian religious inspiration, the cult of the sky, the sun and the stars, and everywhere, a firm belief in a life beyond the grave, in the regions of light or the superior world.
We also state here that the colossal forms of these monuments tell us that they belong to a heroic people with an enormous ambition to transmit to posterity the memory and glory of the deceased.

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X. TERMINI LIBERI PATRIS

1. *'Yperboreon daumaue odos*. The marvelous road of the Hyperboreans.

In the history of megalithic monuments of Dacia, an important place has a long uninterrupted series of several thousand boulders, or huge slabs, which stretched, until the 18th century, from Basarabia, through southern Russia, towards Crimea, out of which a few remains still exist today close to Chisineu.

The learned Domn of Moldova, **Dimitrie Cantermir**, wrote around 1716 the following, regarding this (Descriptio Moldaviae, ed. 1872, p.15):

"Not far from **Chisineu**, a little town near the river Bac, can be seen a series of very large slabs, arranged in a straight line in such a way, as if they might have been placed there by man's hand. But what makes us doubt is, on the one hand, the great size of these slabs, and on the other hand, the length of the terrain on which they stand. In truth, some of these boulders cover a space of 3-4 ells (TN – approx. 3.5 to 4.6m) in width and length, and their line crosses the Nistru and stretches as far as **Crimea**. In peasant language this series of rocks is called the **Keys of Bac** (TN - or Straits), and the peasants, in their simplicity, say that this construction was made by **smei** (dragons), who had conspired to close the course of the river Bac.

The poet **Constantin Stamati**, who lived at Chisineu, in a note written in Russian about the antiquities of Basarabia and published around 1850, communicates also the following important data regarding this megalithic construction: "About three versts (TN – cca 3.2km) south of Chisineu, can be seen a row of **very large stone slabs, half stuck in the ground** in a right line, which the locals call the **Keys of the river Bac**. This row of stones starts at the river **Prut**, built as a wall, passes through the woods of Capriana, and cuts across the whole of **Basarabia**. But the locals **dig up** these stones from time to time, so that the ancient wall is destroyed" (**Hasdeu**, Dictionarul limbei istorice si poporane, Tom. III. v. Bac, p.2795).

And captain **Zascuk**, in the best statistical – geographical description of Basarabia, which he had done at the request of the Russian government, tells us the following: "From Chisineu, in the direction of Prut, through the woods of Capriana, a row of **stone slabs half buried in the ground** once stretched. Those slabs are **still preserved in some places**, and about others the peasants still tell that they've taken from them a few times, for their needs. I don't think that somebody will ever try to prove that those stones once formed a compact wall, from behind which the ancient inhabitants have defended themselves against their neighbors' invasions. Those stones followed a continuous uninterrupted route through woods, swamps and gullies. In all probability they served, like the earth walls, as boundary **signs**" Captain Zascuk also adds in a note: "In late surveys of some monastery estates in Basarabia, especially of those from the woody zone of the

districts Chisineu, Orheiu and Iasi, **rows of stone slabs, thrust in the ground and left there from ancient times** are mentioned" (Ibid. III. p.2795-6).
Finally, in a manuscript note, the Romanian patriot **Alesandru Hasdeu** from Basarabia, also states that he saw those "blocks of stone thrust into the ground" close to Chisineu on the estates Petricani and Ghidighis (Ibid. III. p. 2796).

From this positive data, transmitted by various authors and eye witnesses, it results that this monumental row of slabs thrust vertically into the ground, was nothing else than what in prehistoric archaeology is called an **alignment**, but of an extraordinary length, which stretched from Moldova along the valley of Bac, to far away towards east … towards Crimea, according to Cantemir.
We have to state something else here, regarding the aspect and technical system of this megalithic construction. This gigantic series of several tens of thousands of blocks had not the character of a wall or of a defensive construction. Neither Prince Cantemir, nor the others who saw, examined and described this astonishing monument of antiquity, affirm that the slabs or monoliths which composed this megalithic line, had been arranged and tied together, so as to form a compact and impenetrable wall. Prince Cantemir calls them only "**series maximorum lapidum**". Constantin Stamati calls them "a row in a straight line of very large slabs" and captain Zascuk, quite competent in knowing the character of defensive fortifications, declares very precisely: "I don't think that somebody will ever try to prove that those stones once formed a compact wall; in all probability they served … as **boundary signs**".
By the nature of the terrain which it crossed, as well as by its direction from west to east, this long series of rough stone slabs, thrust into the ground of the wild deserted places of ancient Scythia, was not made in order to prevent an invasion.

We are now presented with the important question, which was the origin and which was the destination of this marvelous megalithic work?
We find a very precious mention of this incomparable monument of prehistoric antiquity with **Quintus Curtius Rufus**, one of the Roman historians, who probably lived at the time of Vespasian (lib. VII. Cap.7).
Based on Greek sources, a large part of which we don't have any more today, Quintus Curtius Rufus had composed a work in ten books "**De gestis Alexandri Magni**", in which he tells us that king Alexander, encouraged by his successes in Asia, after defeating the Persians, Bactrians and other barbarian populations from near the Caspian Sea, decided to expand his expedition also to the **Scythians of Europe**; namely king Alexander believed that until the Macedonians defeated the Scythians of Europe, considered in those times as **undefeatable**, their Macedonian empire in Asia will have just a transitory existence. The defeated populations of Asia, some of which had

already started to rebel, will despise the Macedonians; only if they also defeated and subjected the Scythians of Europe, the Macedonians will appear everywhere as the strongest.

So, king Alexander arrived with his army at Tanais (Don), the great river which separated in those times the Bactrians from the European Scythians, and Europe from Asia. After Alexander founded a new city, called “Alexandria”, and made all the necessary preparations for war with the Scythians, he ordered his army to cross into Europe. The Scythians tried to oppose him from the other bank of the river Tanais. But Alexander and his army, despite the raining arrows of the Scythians and the great rush of the waters of the river Tanais, crossed with boats to the European bank. The Macedonian foot soldiers, leaving the boats, started the battle with lances against the riding bands of the Scythians, who occupied the bank, and the Macedonian cavalry, seeing that the Scythians began to turn their horses, threw themselves on them and broke their ranks. The Scythians, being unable to sustain the attack of the Macedonians, gave free reins to the horses and started to run away, while the Macedonian cavalry, on the order of Alexander, chased them for the rest of the day and **passed even beyond the Posts of Liber Pater**.

These Posts of Liber Pater, Quintus Curtius tells us, “were some **monuments, which consisted of blocks or large slabs arranged in a regular row, at small intervals one from the other**”.

So we have therefore a precise and positive text from the history of Alexander the Great; text which directly refers to this megalithic alignment from European Scythia [1].

[1. In Greek antiquity, some authors thought that the stela (columns), or the legendary Termini of Liber Pater, were situated in the extreme parts of **India** (**Apollodorus** Bibl. III. 5.2). To them **Strabo** answers (III.5.6) that in India nobody saw either the columns of Hercules, or of Dionysius (Liber Pater)].

It results then from this important historical document that this monumental series of stone blocks, whose eastern end reached almost to the Don, was the same megalithic construction as **series maximorum lapidum**, which according to Cantemir stretched from Basarabia through southern Russia towards Crimea.

In ancient historical literature therefore this grandiose monument from the north of the Black Sea, composed of an extraordinary long series of rough monoliths thrust into the ground, had the name **Termini Liberi Patris**.

And this Liber Pater of the Romans, as we saw in the last chapter, was the same legendary personality of Dionysos of the Greeks, and Osiris of the Egyptians (**Herodotus**, lib. II. c. 144; In a Roman inscription from Dalmatia, **Isis** and **Serapis** /Osiris, the universal Egyptian divinities, appear in Latin language as **Libera** and **Liber** (C.I.L.III.nr.2903).

We find the same perfect identity between Liber Pater and Osiris in prehistoric traditions of the Romanian people. According to some of these legends, the huge plough furrow, which cuts from west to east the plains of Romania, Basarabia and southern Russia as far as the Don, had been made by the emperor of the Jidovs, Ostrea-Novac (Osiris), and according to other traditions, this

furrow is attributed to **Ler emperor** (Liber Pater), who had come with countless, evil armies against the inhabitants of this country [2].

[2. In our folk incantations, **Ler emperor** (TN – Ler imparat) appears as a plundering, detested hero. "**Ler emperor**" (Osiris) of Romanian folk traditions is only a warlike figure, who wanders through the world, but totally distinct from "**Ler Domnul**", the son of the holy Mother, or Apollo, of our religious carols. About the origin and archaic meaning of the word "**ler**" see the chapters referring to the first Pelasgian empire. We also note here that Liber Pater of the Romans appears also in an inscription discovered at Narona in Dalmatia under the form **Leiber Patrus** (C.I.L.III.nr.1784), name very close to the Romanian one, **Ler imparat**].

But which was the primitive destination of these famous monoliths arranged in a row, which stretched from Prut over Basarabia and southern Russia, towards Don, close to the point where one passed from Europe to Asia?

In prehistoric antiquity the columns of rough stone also had a purpose of public use. They served in those remote times to indicate to travelers the direction through the less populated lands, and where other orienting signs were missing (**Cartailhac**, La France prehistorique, p.315)[3].

[3. Near **Tanais** also existed, until the Roman epoch, the **Altars** consecrated to **Alexander the Great**, as monuments of his expedition in those parts. Those altars were situated, according to **Ptolemy** (III.5.12), lower than the turns of the river Tanais. **Orosius** mentions also near Tanais **the altars and posts of Alexander the Great** (Historiarum adversus paganos, I. 2)].

The entire vast area of southern Scythia formed until late, in historical times, a pastoral region, deserted spaces of limitless pastures, without cities, villages or forests, on which continuously wandered countless tribes of shepherds, transporting their households and families in carts, from one place to the other (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. 47, 61).

"We have **neither towns, nor cultivated fields**, to be afraid that our enemies will lay them bare", answers **Idanthyrsus**, the king of the Scythians, to **Darius**, the king of the Persians, when the latter asked him to either accept to fight, or bring him gifts, earth and water, as signs of surrender (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. 127).

The Greeks, **Curtius** tells us, called the entire geographical region of European Sarmatia, the "**solitudes of the Scythians**", and the part between the mouths of the Danube, Nistru and the Pontos, or the lands of lower Basarabia, had especially the name of the "**desert of the Getae**" (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. VII. 3.14).

Ammianus Marcellinus (1. XXII c.8) also calls the lands of Scythia **solitudines vastas**; and in "**Divisio orbis terrarium**", antedating the 4th century ad, we read: Dacia. Finitur ab oriente **deserto Sarmatiae** (**Riese**, Geographi latini minores, p.17). On **Tabula Peutingeriana**, the region between the rivers **Agalingus** (Cogalnic in Basarabia) and **Hypanis** (Bug) is designated with the words **sors desertus**.

Through these solitudes, north of the Black Sea, Darius had lost his way, with his entire army; even the warring bands of the Scythians, who were chasing Darius, had lost their way (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. c.136).

In those remote historical times, the only road which presented fewer difficulties for the communication between the Carpathians and the lands near the Meotic lake, was on the valley of Bac in today Basarabia, which then continued from the Nistru towards the Don. But even this road was only a simple road “per deserta”.

On this way the invasion of the Neolithic tribes into Europe had taken place. Here was until late the great line of communication between east and west, between Asia, always poor, and opulent Europe. “**Termini Liberi Patris**”, these monuments of the ancient world, which stretched in a right line from Prut, along the valley of Bac towards Tanais, appear therefore as simple itinerary columns in the deserted wilderness of Scythia, with the purpose of indicating to the travelers and merchants the line of the great road between Asia and Europe [4].

[4. We find an important note with **Pliny**, who tells us (Hist. Nat. IV.17.6) that the **Macedonians**, in this expedition of theirs, had followed into the steps of **Liber Pater** and **Hercules**, or in other words, on **the roads** and **guided** by the remains of the monuments of those heroes. The Romans still had ancient traditions about the famous war deeds of **Liber Pater**, as results from another passage of **Pliny** (Hist. Hat. Lib. VII.1) regarding Pompei the Great].

Osiris, the king of the Egyptians, or **Liber Pater**, as the Romans called him, by defeating Typhon, had also conquered the lands from the north of the Black Sea. The ancient traditions and legends attributed to Osiris the building of this astonishing row of blocks thrust into the ground, between Asia and the Carpathians of Dacia.

In the old prayers of the Egyptians, worded by the priests of Thebes and Memphis, for the divinization of Osiris, is mentioned as an eternal blessing, as one of the great achievements of this monarch, the **opening of the roads in the region of the north**, and the geography of antique times understood par excellence the country of the Scythians as the “region of the north” (**Pierret**, Le livre des morts des anciens Egyptiens, ch. CXLII).

Even **Herodotus** tells us that the **pillars** or **columns of Sesostris** (the same with Osiris) still existed in the lands of Scythia even during his times (lib. II. 103).

And the poet **Ovid** also mentions the triumphal roads of **Bachus** or **Liber Pater**, through Scythia (Fast. III. 714 seqq) [5].

[5. Erecting **triumphal pillars** or **columns** has been in use with the Romanians until the 14^{th} century. The Polish chronicler **Strykowski** writes the following: The Hungarian king **Carolus** (Robert), starting a sudden war against the Valahian (TN – or Muntean, from Muntenia, another name for Valahia, or the Romanian-country) Domn **Basaraba**, was thoroughly defeated by the Munteni and Moldoveni by a stratagem, so that he and a few of his men could barely escape by running to Hungary. **On the place of the battle the Valahian Domni built a church and erected three stone pillars**, as I myself saw in 1574 when returning from Turkey, beyond the little market town Gherghita, two days of travel from the Transilvanian city of Sibiu, in the mountains (**Hasdeu**, Archiva istorica, tom.II.p.7)].

This monumental glorious road of Liber Pater had become legendary in Greek lands even much earlier than the times of Herodotus.

The poet **Pindar** mentions in two odes of his this marvelous monument from the country of the Hyperboreans, settled at the north of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea even from the time of

the Neolithic migration. In one of these odes the text referring to this long series of itinerary columns sounds like this: “Beyond the sources of the Nile, as well as in the country of the Hyperboreans, countless numbers of itinerary pillars exist, made of cut rock, 100 feet tall and arranged in a row, like monuments commemorating some glorious deeds” (Isthmia, V. 20)[6].

[6. Pindar uses the word ***cheleudoi*** (sing. ***cheleudos***), which is not a synonym of ***odoi***, but has the meaning of **itinerary pillars** (posts). From a point of view of its origin and form, ***cheleudos*** is identical with Romanian “**calauz**” or “**calauza**”, word which in Romanian language is applied to persons as well as things, particularly to **the posts which indicate the roads**. In this text Pindar still tells us that the itinerary posts from the country of the Hyperboreans were 100 feet high. Taking as a basis for this unit of measurement the ancient Greek or Olympic foot of 0,382m, the height of these columns was 30,82m. In France, the menhir from Locmariaker at Morbihan, is 21m long. That some of the stone slabs or boulders, which formed the megalithic row near the river Bac, had colossal dimensions, results from the communication of the Russian traveler **Sviniin**, who had visited Basarabia around 1822. According to him, these stones had an extraordinary height, looking at some places like the crest of a mountain (**Hasdeu**, Dict. III. p.2796)].

This countless number or itinerary pillars mentioned by Pindar, assembled in a row through the country of the Hyperboreans, appear therefore to be the same megalithic alignment as the “series maximorum lapidum” about which Cantemir talks, and as “lapides crebris intervallis dispositi”, or “Termini Liberi Patris” of Quintus Curtius.

In another ode of his, the poet **Pindar** praises once more this extraordinary monument form the country of the Hyperboreans. The following are his words (Pythia, X.29):

“One would not find the road, worthy of admiration, which leads to the main place of assembly of the Hyperboreans, even if one traveled on sea or on land” [7].

[7. Pindar presents here the real fact of the triumphal road of the Hyperboreans, in a moral sense. He wants to say in these verses: the road to eternal glory and true happiness cannot be found, either traveling on sea, or on land. They Hyperboreans appear in ancient legends as the most just, the happiest and with a zest for life which went beyond the limits of old age (**Pliny**, lib. IV. 26. 11)].

It results therefore, from these words of Pindar, that in the country of the Hyperboreans at the north of the Danube and the Black Sea, **a monumental road** existed even in his times; an astonishing road, due to the great number and colossal size of its itinerary pillars arranged in a row. The origin of this road, says Pindar, went back to some glorious deeds. So, it was a **triumphal road** as well, identical with “**Scythici triumphi**” of Liber Pater, mentioned by Ovid. Both poets, Pindar and Ovid, referred to the same war events, the same legendary monuments.

This marvelous sacred road from the north of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea, led, as Pindar tells us, to the **common place of assembly** of the Hyperboreans. It crossed therefore a large part of the vast territory of this people.

As we know, the magnificent temple of **Apollo the Hyperborean** was located in the island called **Leuce** or **Alba** (TN – White) near the mouths of the Danube.

And on the lower parts of the river Prut, close to this religious metropolis of the Hyperboreans, a city called **Piroboridava** still existed even during the Roman epoch, doubtless the same capital, the same political center which Pindar calls **Hyperboreon agon**. The geographical location of Piroboridava, mentioned by **Ptolemy** (III.10.6.8) was almost identical with that of later Noviodunum, today Isaccea).
Still on the eastern parts of Dacia, between the rivers Agalingus (today Cogalnic) and Hypanis (Bug), an extended population called "**Dac(i) Petoporiani**" appears settled during the Roman epoch, its evidently altered name of **Daci Piroboriani**, meaning Hyperborean (**Tab. Peut**., Ed. Miller, Segm.VIII.3.4).

We recapitulate:
"**The marvelous (miraculous) road of the Hyperboreans**", about which speaks Pindar, and along which were aligned a countless number of itinerary posts, appears to have been, on the basis of the geographical location of the Hyperboreans, as well as on the character and destination of these monuments, one and the same megalithic construction as the long line of stone boulders thrust into the ground mentioned by Cantemir and Quintus Curtius.

2. *'Exampaios, 'Irai odoi*. The sacred roads of the Scythians.

Herodotus, in his description of Scythia, mentions a region, north of the Black Sea, which the Scythians called in their language **Exampaeos**, word which in Greek translation meant ***'Irai odoi***, meaning the **Sacred Roads** (lib. IV.c.52). These places called Exampaeos were, according to Herodotus, situated at a distance of four days navigation upstream the river Hypanis (Bug), and formed **the frontier** between the **Agricultural Scythians**, settled towards north, and **Alazoni**, with their dwellings towards south (Ibid.IV.c.81). But Herodotus doesn't tell us anything about the origin and destination of these sacred roads of the Scythians.
This sacred road, at the north of the Black Sea, was therefore almost on the same parallel with today Chisineu, having a direction from **west** towards **east**, or vice versa.

During Greek antiquity, the lines of communication established between the principal centers and the more important religious places were called "**sacred roads**".
Along these sacred roads were scattered in antiquity various sanctuaries and temples of divinities, columns, statues, graves of heroes and distinguished people, and other commemorative monuments. On these roads took place the solemn processions of the clergy and the people, on them were sung the funeral hymns, the hymns of victory, of praises and of

thanks to the gods. Finally, on these roads of public safety were transported the gifts of private persons, of the cities, and of the population to the sanctuaries of the gods.

Such a sacred road (***odos iera***) existed in antiquity between **Athens** and **Eleusis**, famous place for the Elysian mysteries, which it was believed to have been the residence of the great divinities Ceres and Proserpine (**Pausanias**, Descriptio Graeciae, I.36.37.38).

Another sacred road was established between **Elis**, the capital of the province with this name, and **Olympia**, the plain famous for the Olympic games of ancient Greece (Ibid. V.c.25.7).

Some of these sacred roads crossed entire provinces.

Three sacred roads led especially to the famous sanctuaries of **Delphi**, which had such an immense role in the religious and political history of Greece.

One of them started in the north, at the valley Tempe, passed over the entire **Thessaly**, over **Doris** and **Locris** and was used by the pilgrims coming from the parts of the north and Thrace. **Another** sacred road came from south-east, from **Attica**. It was built, as traditions say, by Theseus, and served for the sending of gifts to Delphi by the Athenians, the Peloponnesians and the Beotians. Finally, the **third** sacred road towards Delphi started at the port **Crissa** of the Aegean Sea, had a length of 80 stades and was used by the pious travelers who came by way of the sea (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, II Bd. 1842 p.915).

The same institution of the sacred roads is also found with the ancient **Egyptians**.

Strabo, talking about the building of the memorable temple of Thebes in Egypt, the one with one hundred gates, makes the following description of the Egyptian sacred roads: "In front of the temples", says he, "there is a space a jugerum wide or less (TN – approx. 25m), but three or four times as long, or even more. This space is called the sacred road (***dromos ieros***) and along this sacred road statues of sphinxes are aligned on both sides, situated at a distance of 10 ells (TN – cca 11m) from each other, so that a row of these statues is on the right side and another on the left side of the road; the number of these sphinxes is not limited, but depends of the length of each road, and at the end of these two lines of statues there is the vestibule of the temple" (Geogr. lib. XVIII. p.28).

The same monumental aspect must have had also the Exampaeos, or the sacred roads of the Scythians. But what sort of religious monuments could decorate these sacred roads on the deserted expanses of land at the north of the Black Sea?

The Scythians, as **Herodotus** also tells us (lib. IV.c.59), erected neither altars, nor statues or temples to their divinities. The principal monuments which decorated the sacred roads of the Scythians could not be therefore but a long series of enormous **tumuli**, as well as the famous **pillars** of **Liber Pater**, considered sacred [8].

[8. **Herodotus** (lib. IV.c.81) mentions only one sacral object which was deposited at the **Exampaeos.** This antique monument was a **copper crater** of enormous size, which had a capacity of cca 600 amphorae, and the thickness of its sides was 6 fingers. The origin of this sacred vase went back, according to Herodotus, to the times of the Scythian king **Ariantanus** who, wishing to know the number of the Scythians in his empire, had given order that each should bring him an arrow tip. As a huge number of arrow tips was gathered, the king ordered to be made a copper vase out of them, which was consecrated as a monument in the Exampaeos].

There exists though another important geographical proof that this series of huge slabs stuck into the ground, which extended from Prut towards Crimeea and Tanais, was one of the Exampaeos, or the sacred roads of southern Scythia.

The waters of Bac, along which this famous line of monolith monuments passed until the 18th century, flow into ancient Tyras, or Nistru, close to the Romanian village called today Gura-Bacului (TN – the Mouth of Bac). At a short distance, north from this point, there are today situated two villages; one on the right bank and the other on the left bank of Nistru, both having the same characteristic name of "**Speia**" (**Charta Basarabiei**, published by the Russian military topographical Section in 1868-69, col. XXIX. page 7).

From a historical and philological point of view, these two topographical names of **Speia** appear identical with the Scythian term of **Exampae-os**, the last syllable forming here only a simple Greek suffix. These names of **Speia** prove at the same time that ancient Exampaeos of Herodotus, which formed the frontier between the Agricultural Scythians and Alazoni, stretched westwards beyond Nistru, to the valley of Bac [9].

[9. The name of the river **Bac** is not from the German Bach. The origin of this name rests with the ancient legend about the **roads of Bach** or **Liber Pater** through Thrace and Scythia.
In the heroic folk songs of the Romanians is mentioned even today the "**valiant Bac**", the "**outlaw Bac**", who had established a watch service along the long road between Odriu (Adrianopole) and Diu (Vidin).

> (The high emperor) heard, yes he heard,
> The name of **Bac**, of **Bac** the outlaw, of **Bac** the valiant,
> Who put watch on the road, from the hill of Odriu, to close to the Diu …
> *(**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.605)*

Liber Pater or Osiris had in antique traditions and legends various other names, out of which one of the most known was ***Bachos***. In old Slavonic language **bikz** means **bull** (Romanian **bica**, young bull). In Egyptian papyri Osiris bears also the epithet "**bull**" (**Pierret**, Le livre des morts, ch. I.1). According to the doctrines of the Egyptian priests, **Osiris** and **Apis**, the sacred bull, formed the same idea. Apis was only the living image of Osiris, or in other words Osiris was the **god-bull** (fertilizing). This is enough for the time being regarding the history and primitive meaning of the name Bachus].

We have therefore established the following positive fact about the history of the archaic times of Dacia: The long row of huge slabs stuck into the ground, which stretched from Basarabia towards Crimea and Don, represented in a remote antiquity as many sacred monoliths, or **itinerary pillars**, called in historical Roman literature "**Termini Liberi Patris**", placed along the great road, which had no villages and cities in its proximity, which passed through the deserted regions of ancient Scythia, and which connected Asia to Europe. This sacred road, which began in eastern

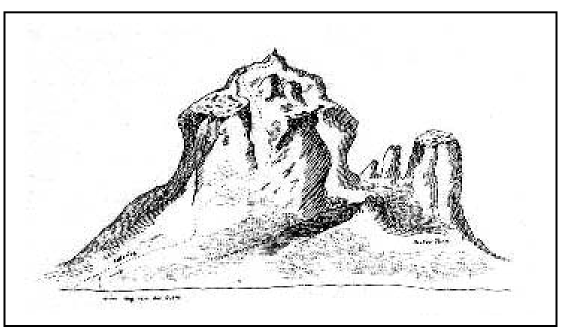
Dacia, presented a grandiose aspect and appeared with Pindar as one of the **marvels** of the prehistoric world (***'Yperboreon daumate odos***). Its origin was connected to memorable war deeds. It was a triumphal road, identical with "**Scythici triumphi**" of Bachus or Liber Pater. According to Herodotus the name of this road in the language of the Scythian tribes was **Exampae-os**, word of Pelasgian origin, whose national form appears to have been "**sam-biae**", meaning **sanctae viae.** (In Romanian language the word "**sant**" (TN – saint) becomes "**sam**" in compounded words, for example **Sam-Petru**, **Sam-Medru**).

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XI. THE MEGALITHIC SIMULACRA OF THE PRIMITIVE PELASGIAN DIVINITIES.

Another type of megalithic monuments of Dacia, which open a vast perspective on the prehistoric moral life at the north of the lower Danube, are the archaic simulacra of the primitive divinities, usually hewn in live rock on the peaks of the mountains, or on the tops and coasts of the hills.
Some of these prehistoric sculptures are so rudimentary, so weathered by air, light and rain, that they appear today more as simple rough columns, while others present more or less a likeness with the figure of man, when seen especially from afar.

Prince **Cantemir** has left us in "Descriptio Moldoviae" (Edit. 1872, p.24-25), written around 1716, the following archaeological notes about one of the most important and colossal megalithic statue of Dacia: "The highest mountain of Moldova is **Cehleul** (TN – today Ceahlau), and if this mountain were known to the ancient poets, it would have been as famous as Olympus, Pindus or Pelias. From its peak, which rises to a huge height in **the shape of a tower**, flows a little stream with a very clear water … In the middle of this peak can be seen **a very ancient statue**, 5 fathoms high (TN – approx. 9.00m), representing **an old woman**, encircled, if I am not wrong, by 20 sheep, and from the natural part of this feminine figure flows a permanent water spring. In truth, it is difficult to decide, if in this monument nature showed its play, or if it was formed as such by the able hand of some master. This statue is not thrust into any base, but it is one with the rest of the mass of the rock, but up from the abdomen and back it is free … Probably this statue has once served as an idol for a pagan cult … How high is this mountain can be ascertained from the fact that, when the sky is clear and the sun descends towards west, this mountain can be seen very clearly, in its entirety, as if it were close by, from the city **Acherman** (Tyras, Cetatea-Alba / TN – the White Citadel), which is 60 hours away. And on the hills around it can be seen traces of horses, dogs and birds engraved in rocks, in such a large number, as if an immense riding army has once passed by".



The highest peak, or the dome of **Cehleu** mountain, seen from the eastern terrace. On the northern part are "**The towers**". *(From Jahrbuch d. siebenb. Karpathenvereines, XVI Jahrg. p.10).*
This strong massif, which dominates with its height all the mountains around, presents a quite curious shape. It certainly looks like a colossal idol. See the ceramic figures from Troy (**Schliemann**, Ilios, p.385-394) and the idol from Turdas (Hunyadm. Evk. I. Tab. IV. 1).

About this same holy mountain of prehistoric antiquity wrote around 1859 the distinguished man of letters of Moldova, **Gh. Asaky**:

“The sailor on the Black Sea sees the high peak of this mountain from the **Cape of Mangalia** to **Cetatea-Alba**. The dweller on the bank of Nistru sees the sun setting behind the mass of this mountain, and the nomad shepherd, after spending the winter with his flocks on the plains of Bugeac, turns back towards home, eyeing the Pion peak or Cehleu, exactly as a ship orients herself by the light of the lighthouse, in order to enter into port” [1].

[1. Romanian folk legends tell that this simulacrum represents **Baba Dochia** (TN – Old woman Dochia) – the Great Mother plus the geographical epithet of ***Dachia*** – who, going up the mountain with her sheep on the first day of March, was caught on the peak of Cehleu by a great icy cold, was **turned to ice** together with the sheep, and later into **stone** (**Asaky**, Nouvelles historiques, 1859, I. p. 36, 43-50). Regarding this statue, we also find the following notes with Asaky (TN – translated from French): “Because of the fame of this place, a **monastery** was built here, which existed until 1704; but on the day of Easter … an avalanche starting from the top of **Pion** (Cehleu) peak, which dislocated and incorporated within it masses of rocks, engulfed the monastery with all its monks and gave a new shape to this place … At that time the simulacrum of **Dochia**, despite its solidity, also suffered a visible change: the upper part, which represented the head and the bust, crumbled, and can be seen at some distance on the ground; this mass, composed of small agglomerations could have figured the face and the hair. The trunk and legs are made of a rock massif of basalt, the gravel accumulated between the legs barely leave space for a man to pass; the rivulet **Albu** has its source there, as **Cantemir** also says. Other agglomerated rocks, representing sheep, encircle the simulacrum here and there, and on the side there is another quite large rock called the **Eagle**”.

According to **Frunzescu,** (Dict. Top. P. 356), the eastern part of Pion or Ceahleu, which is the highest, is called **Panaghia** or **Fecioara** (TN - the Virgin), and the western part is called **Turnul Butului**, or **Turnurile Budei** or **Bughei** (TN – the Tower of Butu, or the Towers of Buda or Bugha). The word ***panagia*** has the meaning of “**saint**” in Greek language, and this name shows that the simulacrum from the peak of Ceahleu had once a **public** cult. Like Panagia, the name **Pion** is also of Greek origin, being synonymous with ***chion***, **column**, **pillar**, **post**.

Other **simulacra** about which we have information, are the following:
At the sources of the **river Domna** (TN – the Lady), at the place called Valea-rea in the Muscel district, can be seen even today some **stone figures in the shape of women**, and the legend tells that 9 old women went on the mountain in the month of March, with their goats, but were changed into stone because of the cold.
On the meadow at the **source of the river Arges**, there is a rock with the figure of a woman, called “**Caprareasa**” (TN – the Goat woman), who had been **turned to stone** by the harshness of the wind (**Martian**, Analele statistice, 1868, p.120).
At the **source of Gilort**, in the Gorj district, there is another rock which represents a “**Baba**” (TN – Old woman) **turned to stone** because of the cold.
Downhill from **Tismana monastery**, on the eastern coast of the valley, there is an **archaic figure** sculpted in rock on the edge of a precipice. The folk call it “**Mama**” (TN – Mother).
On the territory of the villages **Balta** and **Gornovita** in Mehedinti district, there existed until recent times **figures hewn in rocks**, which represented **Baba Dochia** and **her son Dragomir**. The village Gornovita is situated on “**Delul Babelor**” (TN – the Hill of the old women) (Cf. **Spineanu**, Dict. Jud. Mehedinti, p.10,138).
Close to **Vama Buzeului**, in the valley called Urlatore, there is **the stone face** of a woman called **Baba Dochia**, and from there springs a very clear water.
At the village **Caragelele**, Buzeu district, there is **a stone with the shape of a man**, which the legend says had been thrown from the mountain by a daughter of giants.
On the mountain Serba in **Suceva** district, at the place called Petrele rosii, there are rocks and stones which **resemble men** and animals.
In **Bucovina**, near the river of Homor, a rock bears the name of “**Dochia, the Virgin of the mountain**”, who had been turned to stone (**Saineanu**, Studii folclorice, p.12).

On the mountains near Piatra-Craiului, near **Zernesci** in Transilvania, there is a rock with **the face of a woman**. On the territory of the village **Vaida-Recea** in the county of **Fagaras**, there is a rock resembling **the face of an old woman** (probably the same as the former).
On the mountain near the village **Cetea** in Transilvania, rise two high peaks, which look from afar like **two monks**, one of whom seems to hold a bowl in his hand. About another similar simulacrum writes **Muller** (Siebenburgische Sagen, p.168).
In the county **Bihor** in Hungary, there is a legend about "**Baba Dochia**", who turned to stone on the mountain "Gaina", because of a cold icy storm.
In **Banat**, on the mountain near **Almas**, there are two stone posts which, according to the folk legend, represent **an old woman and her son turned to stone** by cold (**Schott**, Walach Marchen, nr. 6, p.112-115, 330)].

This primitive statue from the highest peak of Cehleu mountain is not the only monument of megalithic sculpture in the countries of Dacia. The entire chain of the Carpathians, from the tablelands of Moldova to the north-west parts of Hungary, presents countless numbers of rough imposing columns, which rise on tops of rock masses and which show from a distance the forms and attitude of some human figures, about which the people says in its legends that represent the figures turned to stone of some mythical personalities.

On the road from Trebici towards Mezerici, writes the Moravian man of letters **Schuller**, can be seen a rock boulder with a particular shape, which seems to resemble a woman with a cover on her head. The locals call this stone figure "**The old Mother**" or "**The Grandmother from Trebici**", and the legend tells us that this megalithic statue represented a very wise old woman, with the name of "**Altruna**" (Pelasgian divinity **Larunda**, the Mother of the Lari, **Alraun** in German legends), who dwelt close to this rock. She knew the healing power of plants and healed with kindness all the sick people who called on her. Later though, she became wicked and because of her greed for money she was turned to stone on the top of that rock (Sagen aus Mahren, 1888, p.164). Another rock with the figure of a woman called "**The stone maiden**" is in the forest of Rakwitz in Moravia (Ibid. p.167).

The general character of all these monuments of megalithic sculpture is that the types are hewn in gigantic style and in irregular shapes; that generally these simulacra have the appearance of human figures only when seen from a distance; that these primitive images appear everywhere only on tops of mountains or hills, on the coasts of valleys, around spring sources, around mountain passes and in the proximity of roads, from where vast perspectives open.
In the most ancient times known by history, statues representing the faces of divinities in an artistic form did not exist, either in Greece, or in Asia Minor.
For the pious feeling, but tough, of those times, a simple shapeless figure made of wood or stone, and symbolizing the divinity, was enough.

This is how a womanly figure, sculpted in rock in a primitive fashion, had become legendary even in ante-Homeric times (**Homer**, Iliad, XXIV.602 seqq).

This huge statue, hewn in rock on the top of the mountain **Sipyl** in Asia Minor, represented **Niobe**, the daughter of Tantalus, the wife of king Amphion of Thebe of Beotia, the granddaughter of Jove and the titan Atlas, who supported with his head the pole of the sky.

Niobe, proud that she was the happy mother of twelve children, and apart from this, a beautiful woman of divine origin, the wife of a rich king reigning over extensive territories, had the vanity to consider herself higher than **Latona**, the powerful and popular goddess, about whom she said with contempt that she had only two children, **Apollo** and **Diana**. Aspiring to divine honors in Latona's place, Niobe invited her people to desert the altars of this goddess, and stopped them from bringing her honors and sacrifices. Latona, resentful of Niobe's insolence, and of her contesting her divinity, asked her children for help. They, in order to avenge the offense brought to their mother, killed with their arrows all the children of Niobe, while Niobe was turned into stone and taken by winds to the top of the mountain Sipyl in Lidia in Asia Minor, where this stone figure shed tears day and night (**Apollodorus**, Bibl. III. 5.6; **Ovid**, Metam. VI. 146 seqq).

Pausanias writes about this legendary monument of prehistoric antiquity (lib. I c. 21.3; lib.VIII c. 2. 7): "I saw and examined this statue of Niobe, after I climbed on Sipyl mountain. It is a hard rock, with a precipitous edge. When someone is close to this rock, it doesn't appear to have any shape of woman or human being who cries, but when someone looks at it from afar, it appears as a sad woman who cries. (It seems that in ancient times the primitive statue from Cehleu also "shed tears": "Of grief over my young one, **the rocks cry on Cehleu** - **Tocilescu**, Material folcloric, I. 2. 1406).

This colossal statue of Niobe on Sipyl mountain was therefore so ancient, that its cult had disappeared even around the beginning of the historical epoch, and all that had been preserved at the time of Homer was only a simple legend, about the turning into stone of an arrogant and impious woman.

Also on the mountain Sipyl in Lidia, on the rock called **Codin**, there was during the Graeco-Roman epoch a primitive statue of "**The Great Mother**" or "**The Mother of Gods**", which, as **Pausanias** tells us (lib. III. c. 22 4), was "**the most archaic of all the simulacra of this divinity**, belonging to the same epoch as the ancient figure of Niobe from another peak of Sipyl mountain.

The Phrygians believed that the divinity of the **Great Mother, sleeps over winter**, and in summer wakes up (**Plutarc**, Oeuvres, Tom. XI, 1794, p.367). This has the same common idea with the Romanian legend about the turning to ice of the "Old women" (Babe).

On the mountain **Liban** in Syria, according to **Macrobius**, there was an antique statue with a covered head, in a sad attitude, supporting her face with her hand covered in her cloak; when seen from the front, it seemed that it shed tears. Macrobius says that, with the Assyrians and the Phoenicians, the area above the earth, which we inhabit, is personified by the goddess **Venus**, and this statue from the mountain of Liban was once a simulacrum of the Phoenician Venus; at the same time it was **a simulacrum of the earth**, symbolizing our terrestrial globe during **winter**,

when it is covered by clouds and without sun, when the springs, which represent the eyes of the earth, flow with more water, and the bare fields present a sad face (Saturnaliorum, lib. I. 21)

In the town **Paphos** in Cyprus there was a renowned archaic temple consecrated to the goddess **Venus**, and the statue of this divinity, according to **Tacitus** (Hist. II. 3), did not have a human form, but only a simple conical shape, wider at the base and pointed at the top, in the shape of a boundary post. We cannot know today the meaning of this shape.

The inhabitants of the town **Thespiae** in **Beotia**, according to **Pausanias** (lib. IX. 27.1), venerated most among all the divinities, even from the beginning of their religion, **Eros** (Cupid), the most beautiful of all the gods, but his statue was only **a rough stone, but very ancient**.

Hesiod tells us in his Theogony (v.497) about **the stone which Rhea had presented to Saturn** to swallow when she had given birth to Jove, that this new monarch of the ancient world thrust it later into the ground near the town **Pytho**, to be a future monument of veneration by the mortals.

On the territory of the town **Sicyon** in the north of the Peloponnesus, as **Pausanias** writes (lib. II. 9.6), there was a simulacrum of Jove with the epithet **Milichios**, and one of **Diana Patroa**. Milichios was in the shape of a pyramid, while Patroa had the shape of a column.

In the town **Orchomenos** in **Beotia**, the most ancient temple was that of the **Graces**, and their statues were just some simple **rough stones** (**Pausanias**, lib. IX. 38. 1).

Also near the town **Gyteon** in the **Peloponnesus**, the same author tells us (Ibid. III. 22.1) that there was even in his time a simulacrum in the shape of a **rough boulder**, and this stone was called in the language of the Doriens, **Zeus Cappotas**, meaning “Jove who rested”.

Pausanias writes also the following:

In the town **Pharae** in **Achaia**, near the statue of Hermes, there are some **30 stones stuck into the ground**, having a tetragonal shape, which the inhabitants of Pharae venerate, giving to each stone the name of a god, and “**once all the Greeks used only rough stones as simulacra, to which they gave divine honors**” (Ibid.VII.22.4).

At the village called **Hyett** in **Beotia**, there still existed in his time an ancient temple, dedicated to **Hercules**, and a statue of this god, which was not an artistic work, but a simple **rough stone, as dictated by the archaic rite** (Ibid. IX. 24.3).

Other sacred stones dedicated to **Hercules** existed in **Spain**, about which **Strabo** writes the following (Geogr. lib. III. 1.4):

On the sacred promontory of Spain there is no sanctuary or altar consecrated to Hercules or other divinities. All what is there, are only some upright **rough stones**, set in some places in groups of three or four, and the people make religious processions to these stones, and following the custom of the ancestors, lay wreaths and make libations on them.

Around 204 bc, the Roman state was in one of its most difficult situations. Hannibal, its sworn enemy, had been for 16 years on the land of lower Italy, together with his army of undisciplined mercenaries, and on another hand, an epidemic made ravages among the whole army of the

Consul P. Licinius Crassus. By order of the Senate, the priests consulted the **sibylline books**, in which they found the following sentence: "**When a foreign enemy will enter with war on the territory of Italy, he could be defeated and chased away if the Great Mother goddess was brought to Rome from Pessinus** (**Livy**, lib. XXIX. c.10). The same idea of the sibylline books is presented by **Ovid** in the following form: "Mother is missing, Roman, go and search for Mother, and when she will come, receive her with clean hands" (Fast. Lib. IV.239).

The legates appeared on the shores of Asia Minor with five big ships, each having five rows of oars, so that they will show the dignity of the Roman people. They presented themselves to king Atalus in Pergammon, who took them with goodwill to Pessinus, and gave them "**the sacred stone, about which the inhabitants of that place said that it was the Mother of gods**". The legates transported it to Rome. This stone, **Arnobius** tells us (VII. 49), was not too big, had an angular shape on the edges, was hard, unpolished and represented a simulacrum with a less definite face.

Regarding other rough simulacra considered as antique images of divinities, **Lampridius** writes that Heliogabalus had wanted to lift from the temple of Diana at **Laodicea** the **stones** called "**sacred**", and take them to Rome (Heliogabalus, c.7). It is without doubt that Laodicea of Syria is meant here, or that from "near the sea", called in antiquity **Ramitha** (**Stephanus Byzanthinus**, *Laodicheia*), after the name of a shepherd **Ramanthas** (Raman athas), an ancient Pelasgian locality, to which the Romans accorded the prerogatives of **a colony with Italic right**.

So, there existed in Roman religion, even during the time of the empire, a strong tendency of archaism in regard to the figure of divinities.

The legend of **Ariadna** turned to stone has a special significance for the **history of the megalithic simulacra of Dacia**.

In the island called **Naxos**, situated close to Delos, there was during the Graeco-Roman antiquity a rock, which represented in its upper part the figure of a woman, in the same sad stance as the statue of Niobe on the mountain Sipyl. According to the Graeco-Roman ancient traditions, this stone figure represented beautiful Ariadna, the daughter of king Minos of Crete, crying after the hero Theseus, who had kidnapped her from her parents' house, only to abandon her later on this solitary island. According to this tradition, Ariadna turned to stone and rock, more because of the harshness of the cold wind and the climate, than because of her sadness, which shows us that the essence of the Romanian legends about the turning to stone of the Babe in the mountains, because of the cold, is **a tradition** from the first times of antiquity.

The poet **Ovid** presents this ancient legend in the following way (Heroid. X):

"There was a mountain", says Ariadna, "on the top of which were only a few trees, and on this mountain rises a rock, polished by the waves of the sea. I climb on this rock and measure with my eyes the vast expanse of the sea. From here, where very cold winds blow on me, I saw the sails

of your ship, swelled by the dangerous wind (Boreas). Once I saw them, or maybe I thought I saw them, I was seized by shivers much colder than ice, and I got **numb** … With my eyes aimed towards the sea and **turned to ice, I sat on the rock, and I turned into stone, exactly like that stone seat**. Look at me now if you could, not with your eyes, by in your thought, how I sit on top of this rock, on which beat the restless waves of the sea".

The origin of this antique simulacrum from the island Naxos harked back to a race of people from the parts of the lower Danube.

As **Diodorus Siculus** tells us (lib. V. 50), the island Naxos was inhabited in the beginning by some people whom the ancients called **Thracians**, migrated there from **the empire of Boreas**. But **pre-antique Thrace** included not only the eastern parts of Hem peninsula, but also the vast territories of **Dacia** and **Scythia** (**Stephanos Byzanthinos**, ***Schitai, ethnos Thrachion***). **The empire of Boreas** was located at the north of the lower Danube (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. V. 79), and had its centre in the **Ripaei** mountains, or Carpathians (**Homer**, Iliad, XV.v.171; **Isidorus**, Orig. XIII. 11.13; **Stephanos Byzanthinos**, ***'Ripaia oros 'Yperboreon***). So the island of **Naxos** had had in the beginning the same population as the island of **Delos**, near which it was located.

In conclusion:

Even from the most remote times of prehistory, there existed in the eastern parts of Europe and western Asia, a type of megalithic monuments, **archaic simulacra**, some sculpted in live rock, on the tops or coasts of mountains and hills, others stuck into the ground as menhirs, or rough columns, near temples and other holy places; monuments which, by the religious belief of the peoples of those times, **represented certain divinities**. Many of these megalithic simulacra had an extremely great age, so that the memory of their origin and cult had been lost even before the beginnings of Greek history; on the other hand, the time had erased from these stones almost all traces of human hand, like for example the statues of Niobe and Ariadna, and all that had been preserved in local traditions was only a confused reminiscence, a simple mythical legend [2].

[2. We also find traces of primitive statues of the Great Mother in the mountains of Western Europe. In Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum (Ed. Parthey, 263), a station called "**Matrona**" is mentioned in the Cotic Alps, which today separate Italy from France. This mountain called Matrona, as **Ammianus Marcellinus** tells us (XV. 10), formed **the highest peak** and the most difficult to climb in the Cotic Alps. Another geographical name of "Matrona" appears in ante-Roman Gaul. **Cesar** (B.G. I. 1) tells us that the rivers **Matrona** and **Sequana** separated the Belgians from the Gauls. Doubtless, the river Matrona was named as such after **a simulacrum of the Great Mother**, which had existed at its sources, exactly as in Romania, where such primitive statues (Babe) are mentioned at the sources of the rivers Ialomita, Domna, Arges and Gilort, and where one had probably also existed once at the sources of the river Hypanis or Bug in Scythia (Cf. **Herodotus**, IV. 52: ***mater 'Ypanios***].

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XII. THE PRINCIPAL PREHISTORIC DIVINITIES OF DACIA

1. Kerus, Cerus manus, Duonus Cerus, Ceriul, Caraiman, Ceriul domnul.

The megalithic monuments of Dacia, which present in such primitive forms the images of ante-Homeric divinities, are part of the positive history of this country.
The character of these images is sacral, from the origins of this ante-Hellenic cult, to its disappearance.
The most archaic religion, whose moral traces are found among all European peoples, is the primitive worship of the **Sky** (**Plato**, Cratylus, I. 293; **Pliny**, H.N.II.1) and the **Earth** (**Plato**, Tiameus, p.211, **Cicero**, De nat. deor. III. 20), seen as generative elements.
The Sky (TN - **Ceriul**), personified by the Greeks, in a quite late prehistoric epoch, under the name of **Uranos**, and the Earth (TN - **Pamantul**) or **Gaea** (***Ga, Gaia***), form the most archaic beginnings of the European religion.
The Sky and the Earth had been seen as the "**Princes of the ante-Olympic divinities**" (**Varro**, De lingua Latina, lib. V. 57). They were the "**Great Gods**" of the vanished world (Ibid, V.58), the "**Parents**" of the first people on earth (**Pliny**, H. H. lib. XVIII.21), and they were first invoked by the most ancient heroes of the Pelasgian nation (**Eschyl**, Prometheus, v. 88-90).
On "**Sky**" and "**Earth**" were sworn the most severe and religious oaths in prehistoric antiquity (**Virgil**, Aen. XII. 174 seqq).
Homer presents **Latona** (Leto) making the following oath to the island of **Delos**: "Let it be known to the **Earth**, and the broad **Sky**, and the water of the river **Styx** which flows under the earth, that I make this oath, the greatest and heaviest in front of the blessed gods, that here (Delos) will be for ever the revered altar and the holly grove of Apollo" (Hymn. in Apoll. v. 84 seqq).
When the **Romans** renewed their alliance pact with all the **Latins**, around 258bc, this pledge of theirs had the following words: "Let be peace between the Romans and all the Latin peoples, as long as the **Sky** and the **Earth** will stay in the same place" (**Dionysius of Halikarn.** lib. 6, c. 95).
Christian religion considered this solemn invoking of the "Sky" and the "Earth" as a manifestation of pagan beliefs, and tried by theological subtleties to eliminate the use, so deeply rooted within the people, to swear on "Sky" and on "Earth". "You must not" says **Mathew the Evangelist**, "swear on **sky**, because it is God's throne, or on **earth**, because it is the seat of his feet" (c.5-7 v.34-37).
"Sky" and "Earth" were the first **consecrated Gods** of the ancient world. To them were dedicated for the first time the high peaks of the mountains, hills and promontories, especially the heights where the clouds gathered and the storms formed (**Hesiod**, Theog. 129).

Their temples and altars were on the mountains, sacrifices were made to them there according to a mysterious archaic ritual, and there were celebrated the religious festivals, the assemblies for common agreements of the different tribes and their fairs.

The **origin** of this old cosmogonic religion of the Sky and Earth was considered during the epoch of classical Greece as **barbarous** (Pelasgian).
“As we see” **Socrates** tells Plato, “**the first people in Greece** (the Pelasgians) considered as gods in those times only those who **were worshiped by most of the barbarians**, meaning the sun, the moon, the **earth**, the stars and the **sky**” (**Plato**, Cratylus, I. p.293).
And the ancient Greeks meant firstly under the name “**Barbarians**”, the populations from north of Greece, and only secondly the Asians and Africans.
“The Greeks do not know to this day, when I write this, where has each god originated from”, says **Herodotus** (lib. II. 53), “or if they have always existed, and what shape they have”.
And in another chapter, (Ibid. lib. II. c. 50, 53) Herodotus expresses the same opinion as his contemporary Socrates, that the name of the divinities, who the Egyptians claimed they didn’t know, the Greeks had received from the **Pelasgians**.

As for the **Romans**, in their oldest inscriptions as well as in their greatest religious literature, the Sky (TN - Ceriul) appears as **Kerus**, **Cerus manus** and **duonus Cerus**, **deus magnus** (in a fragment of **Carmina Saliare** – **Varro**, L.L.VII.26) [1].

[1. In the graves of **Etruria** and **Latium** were often found cups with inscriptions dedicated to the gods. Such a cup was discovered on the territory of the Volsci, with the inscription **KERI POCOLOM**, and two other cups in other localities with the dedication **Saeturni pocolom** and **Volcani pocolom** (C.I.L.I. nr. 46.48.50).
In the ancient **Carmina Saliare**, the Sky was also venerated under the name of **Cerus manus** (**Festus** s. v. Matrem matutam). In old folk Latin language, the form **Caer-us** was also used for **Cerus**, as can be ascertained from the adjective **caeruleus** (an azure color), word which the poets use as an epithet for the sky. We also find **coeli caerula templa** with **Ennius** (**Cicero**, Div. I.20) or only **caerula coeli** with **Ovid** (Met. XIV, 814).
A great number of words from the ancient **Carmina Saliare** had become obscure for the Roman authors, and Varro complains that their primitive meaning was not known any more (Ibid. VII.2).

The ancient words of **duonus Cerus** from Carmina Saliare have been preserved to this day in Romanian folk songs under the form of “**Ceriului si Domnului**” (TN – to/of the Sky and the Lord).

> Pasarica Ceriului, Ceriului si Domnului ***(Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.90)*
> (TN – Little bird of the Sky, the Sky and the Lord)

Today we cannot know what role played in the ancient Pelasgo - Latin religion the “Little bird of the Sky”, which denotes how archaic is its reminiscence in the Romanian folk songs].

In the oldest **Carmina Saliare**, **Cerus manus** is an expression identical with ***megas Ouranos*** of **Hesiod** (Theog. 176. 208). From a historical and etymological point of view, the epithet **manus** is the same word as **magnus** [2].

[2. The interpretation of **creator bonus** given by **Festus** to the obscure words **Cerus manus**, does not correspond to the epithets given to the gods, or to their real meaning. Roman authors, lacking a good knowledge of the rustic language, and despising any investigations in this field, have been the worst etymologists. In a Roman inscription in Africa is mentioned **Deus Manus** (C.I.L.VIII. nr. 9326), the title of Saturn as **deus magnus**.
In Romanian language, the archaic suffix "**man**" with the meaning of **big** (TN – mare), it is still preserved in some words, for example "**hotoman, lotroman, cotosman, goloman**". And see the Latin word **immanis**, enormously big].

Numerous and important traces of the ante-Christian religion of the Sky (Ceriu) still exist with the Romanian people of the countries of old Dacia.

"**Ceriul**" as divinity is still revered and invoked in carols, old songs and solemn orations of the Romanians, under the name of **Ceriu**, **Ceriul sfant** (N.T.- the Holy sky) , **Ceriul cu stelele** (N.T.- the Sky with the Stars), **Ceriul Domnul** (N.T. – the Sky Lord), **Naltul Ceriu** (N.T.- the High Sky) and **Parinte bun** (N.T.- Good Parent), exactly as it was venerated by the ancient Latins as **Kerus, Caelus, Cerus manus, Duonus Cerus** and **Parens** [3].

[3. He crossed himself, to the **sky** he prayed … *(**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.36)*

"If you wished to live, give praises to the **sky** … *(Ibid. p.37)*

He started to read, to the **sky** to bow … *(Ibid. p.29)*

He's the son of the **sky**, and **lord** of the earth… *(**Marienescu**, Carols, p.13)*

They gave him a name,
Son of the Sky and of the earth…. *(Carol from Constanta district)*

With raised voice from the **earth**, shouting to the **holy sky** … *(**Marian**, Spells, p.111)*

With raised voice up to the **sky**, with tears down to the **earth** … *(Ibid. p.2)*

Ask girl to be forgiven, by mother, by uncle,
by the **starry sky** … *(**Marian**, Weddings at Romanians, p.393)* ***Ouranos asteroeis*** in **Hesiod**'s Theogony (v.106 seqq).

And they lifted him, up to the **high sky**,
To **good parent** … *(**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.18)*

"There is this custom that people say in their prayers "Lord, give me the help of the **Sky** and the **Earth**" *(Grumazesci village, Nemt district)*].

The archaic name of **Cerus manus** has also been preserved in Romanian popular traditions. Various mountains and hills on the territory of old Dacia, which once had been consecrated to this supreme divinity of **Cerus manus**, bear even today the names **Caraiman** and **Caliman**.

And in the monuments of Romanian folk literature, Caraiman appears as **Lord of the thunderbolt and lightning**, as **the great and powerful judge of the world**, precious historical evidence that once a powerful Uranic religion held sway on Dacia's territory [4].

[4. Near Omul (TN - the Man) Peak in Bucegi Mountains, rises another peak, 2496m high, called **Caraiman**, facing the mountain of **Babele** (TN - Old Women), where remains of some prehistoric

altars exist even today. We also find the name **Caraiman** in other parts of the country: **Caraiman**, mound (Buzeu d.); **Caraiman**, mound and forest (Iasi d.); the group of Mosneni called Musceleni from the village Colti, Buzeu district, claim **Caraiman** as first ancestor (**Iorgulescu**, Dict. Geogr. jud. Buzeu p.189). But the old folk name is **Caraman**, not Caraiman.
One **Caelius mons** is mentioned during the Roman epoch in Rhaetia (Itin. Antonini Aug. Ed. Parthey p.116).
North-west from **Cehleu**, on the territory of Transilvania, there is another high mountain called **Caliman**. Under this mountain, a lower peak is called by Romanian folk the "**Lord's Chair**". Even the name **Cehleu** seems, from an etymologic point of view, to be an archaic, but corrupt form of **Caelius** (mons.). Having the same name there are: **Caliman**, hill, Prahova d.; the Peak of **Calimana**, Muscel d.; **Calimanesa**, hill in Tecuci d.; **Calimanel**, mountain, Suceva d.; **Calimanesci**, two hills, Valcea d. (Marele Dict. Geogr. II. 261-262); **Calimanel**, mountain in Biharia (**Schmnidl**, Das Bihargebirge, p.277).

Carmen Sylva, in her remarkable "**Tales of Peles**" (Pelesch-Marchen, p.83 seqq.), publishes a legend about Caraiman Mountain in Prahova district. In the ancient times, writes she, when the sky was closer to the earth and there was more water than dry land, lived in the Carpathians a giant called **Caraiman**. He had the power to create people, to make vegetation grow on plains and mountains, to produce earthquakes and storms. He forced the sea to withdraw from the plains of this country, and his voice echoed like thunder. **The first people created by Caraiman** had been good and happy in the beginning, but later they became wicked and rose against their creator. But Caraiman shook the earth, **which swallowed them with all their animals and houses**. The legend seems to be local, says she at the beginning of this narration].

Even during the Neolithic epoch, belief in an abstract supreme divinity had started to receive real human shapes. Various monarchs of that far-away world, admired for their good deeds and feared for their extraordinary power, started to be considered as gods, public cults were instituted to them, and became revered after death

The first apotheosis in Europe was that of **Uranos**. The Greeks identified the divinity of the Sky with a political personality even from the beginning of their religion, a personality who had distinguished himself by his wisdom, activity and prodigious good deeds. They called him **Uranos** (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. III. 56), meaning **Munteanul** (TN - the Man from the Mountain), the etymology of this word coming from ***oros, ouros***, mountain (cf. **Hesiod**, Theog. 129; **Grimm**, D.M.I.319).
All the legends and ancient traditions present this Uranos as one of the great monarchs of the prehistoric world. He was **the founder of the great Pelasgian empire in Europe and Africa**, the first to govern the world, and the one to whom the priests instituted by him, attributed divine qualities and honors for the great benefits he brought to the human race. **Uranos** was the son of **Gaea**, according to Hesiod, but according to other traditions he was the son of ***Okeanos*** (**Pauly-Wissova**; Real-Encycl.: **Caelus**, p.1276), meaning the **Istru**, "the greatest and holiest of rivers" (**Herodotus**, IV.50; **Dionysius Per**.v. 298).
The ancient Latins though, firstly personified the great divinity of the universe under the name of **Caelus** (**Cicero**, De Natura Deorum, lib. III. 17). This Caelus, probably one and the same with Uranos of the Greeks, appears as the father of **Dokius**, one of the first to civilize the ancient world, and who taught people to build dwellings from clay (**Pliny**, H. N. lib. VII. 57. 4).

As for his iconic representation, Caelus was shown as a bearded man, figured only to his waist; while on other monuments of Roman art he is represented with a cloth arched above his head (**Preller-Jordan**, Rom. Myth. 3rd Aufl. II. 372), symbolizing the infinite and unknown space of the upper world, attribute which later was passed on to Saturn, as father and lord of the universe, and finally to Jove.

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2. *Gaia. Ga*. Tellus, Terra, Pamentul (TN – the Earth)

Beside the supreme power of the Sky (Cer), as a shining and creative force, the primitive cult also worshipped the telluric productive force of the Earth (**Pament** TN – today pamant), under the name of ***Gaia, Ga***, **Tellus**, and later **Terra**.

Gaea represented, according to antique theological ideas, the divinity of nature in feminine form, the mother who gives birth and educates.

As a divinity, Gaea had different names in the public cult, according to the different dialects of the primitive tribes, pastoral and agrarian (**Eschyl**, Prometheus v.210).

But her honorific principal title was ***Ma, Mater*** (**Eschyl**, Supplices, v.890: ***Ma Ga*** as Matter Terra), **Mater** (**Varro**, L.L. V.64) and **Parens**, while her oldest attributes were ***Pammateira*** (**Homer**, Hymn. in Terram Matrem, v.1), ***Pammator*** (**Eschyl**, Prometheus, v.90), or Mother of all, and ***protomantis*** (**Eschyl**, Supplices, v.117), the first prophetess, only literary attributes in fact, showing in their forced form the early authors' attempts to assimilate to Greek language some archaic Pelasgian words. The names **Pammitera, Pammitor** and **protomantis**, applied exclusively to the divinity Gaea, are just simple imitations of the word **Pament**, which belongs to the Pelasgian idiom.

The origin of this divinity, as a principle and a personification, was at the north of the Lower Danube, the place where **Homer** and **Hesiod** place **the genesis of the Gods**, at the ancient river called ***'Okeanos potamos*** (**Homer**, Iliad, XIV.v.201) or Istru, where was the holly island of **Gaea**, with the golden apples (**Pherechydis**, Frag. 33).

At the point where the mountains of Banat are separated from the Serbian ones, and the Danube enters the dangerous straits of the Carpathians, downstream of the town today called Moldova, rises in the middle of this river a rock with a particular shape, and near it stretches an island of a considerable size. This rock and island had a very important role in the prehistoric religion, and they have even today the name **Baba Caia**, meaning the **Old Mother Gaia** [5].

[5. **Varro** (L.L.c.64) tells us that with the Romans, **Caius** and **Caia** were the same names as **Gaius** and **Gaia**). During the Roman epoch, a mountain is mentioned in Spain, with the name **Caia** (**Riese**, Geographi latini minores, p.36). According to **Liber coloniarum** (Grom. Vet. 239), the emperor

Augustus consecrated all the mountain peaks, summa montium, to the divinity of the **Great Mother**, who represented **Gaea**].

This rock from the middle of the Danube had once represented a primitive simulacrum of the Gaea divinity, to whom was also consecrated the neighboring island.

(We shall reproduce in the last parts of this book the figure of this rock and the antique legends of Gaea from the Danube).

In the Roman cult in Dacia, Pamentul, Gaea or Tellus, as national divinity, still had the particular name of **Dacia** (C.I.L.III. nr. 1063) and **Terra Dacia** (Ibid, III. nr. 1351, 996).

Numerous traces of the cult of Pament as a divinity are found even today in the religious beliefs and practices of the Romanian people.

In the most difficult situations of human life, help is solicited from Cer (Sky) and Pament (Earth). The most terrible curses are made by invoking the Earth. She is the protective mother of the human beings, from the first moments of life, to beyond the grave [1].

[1. "Usually, when the hour of birth comes, the future mother is laid down on the floor, so that the **earth, as mother of all**, to receive first **the newborn** (**Reteganul**, Colectiune manuscrisa, III, p.9). In a lamentation from Banat, the Earth is also called **parent** (TN – parinte), in the same way in which in Roman theology it had the epithet parens.

Earth, earth, from today onwards,
Be **a parent**, do not make haste, to rot me … *(**Mangiuca**, Calindariu pe 1882, p.134).*

Pray to that **earth**, when you'll go to your grave … *(**Burada**, Datinele popl rom at funerals, p.95)*

Who is breaking **the oath**, **the earth** doesn't receive him … *(**Iarnic**-Barsan, Doine, p.258)*].

Gaea's image, or the Earth's, was represented, as **Suidas** tells us, as a woman holding in her hand a **bucium** (***tympanon***). We find the same image in Romanian incantations.

The earth personified as a divinity appears here under the name of "Mother of God", holding in her hand a **golden "bucium"** which, when it echoes in the four corners of the world, all the goddesses are coming together, and the earth rocks.

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3. Saturn as Princeps Deorum, Manes, Deus Manus, and *Tartaros*

(**Tatal**, TN – the Father).

After the death of **Uranos**, the founder of the great Pelasgian empire in Europe, the rule over the world passed on to his son **Saturn**.

Like Uranos, Saturn was one of the great kings of the Pelasgian race.

According to the theocratic ideas of those times, the same titles and divine honors previously held by Uranos, and before him by the Sky, in its cosmogenic meaning, were now attributed to Saturn.

The same dogma was preserved, but the name of Uranos was replaced by that of Saturn in the public cult. It was only the succession of a new monarch to the empire of the world, a simple change of its political head and supreme priest of the cult, but not a change of the dogma of its religion. So, according to the theological doctrines of those times, Saturn was on his turn considered "**Princeps deorum**" (**Macrobius**, Saturn. I.c.7), "**the beginner of all the gods and of the entire posterity**" (**Isidorus Hispal**. Originum VIII.11.30; **Plato**, Cratylus, Ed. Didot, I.p.296), or, as **Dionysius of Halikarnassus** says (lib.I.c.38), the divinity of Saturn embraced now the whole nature of the universe.

Under the reign of Saturn, mankind made a huge progress on its way to civilization.
Saturn is the one who, as ancient traditions tell us, made the people leave their wild sort of lives, brought them together in a society, gave them laws (**Virgil**, Aen. VIII.320), and taught them agriculture (**Macrobius**, Staurn. I.7; **Diodorus Siculus**, lib. V. 66. 4). He is in general the **beginner and distributor of human happiness**.
During the worldly empire of Saturn, **the golden age** took place, the **earthly paradise of the Bible**, those centuries full of abundance and contentment, when justice and goodwill ruled on this earth, essential conditions for the moral and material happiness of mankind (**Hesiod**, Opera et Dies. V. 109 seqq; **Ovid**, Metam. I. 89 seqq.; **Virgil**, Eclog. IV. 6).

The cult of Saturn was especially spread in the northern parts of Istru and in Italy.
The ancient religion of **Dacia** was initially **celestial** or Uranic, and later the same religion will have Saturnian forms.
The Getae, as the historian **Mnaseas of Patrae** tells us, **venerated Saturn, whom they called Zamolxis** (**Photius**, Lex – Frag. Hist. graec. III p.153, frag. 23).
The northern sea is called in Greek literature, as well as in Roman literature, the **Sea of Saturn** (**Dionysius**, Orbis Descriptio, v.32; **Pliny**, H.N.Iv.27.3).
Everywhere during antiquity, the entire north-west region was considered as **the empire of the religion of Saturn** (**Diodorus Siculus**, V. 66. 5; **Cicero**, De nat. Deor. III. 17; **Theompompos**, Fragm. 293; **Ephorus**, Fragm. 38).
In ancient cosmogenic theology, the honorific name of Saturn was ***pater*** (**Pindar**, Olymp.II.v.84; **Eschyl**, Eumenides, v.641; **Macrobius**, Saturn. I. c.7), **deus parens** (**Corn. Nepos**, c.12), meaning **father** of the gods, of mankind and of all the forces of nature, exactly as the Sky (Cerus manus) had had the same attributes earlier.
Apart from these other names, Saturn also had the epithet ***presbites*** (**Lucian**, Saturn.V); with the Romans, **senex, vetus deus** (**Ovid**, Fast. V.627; **Virgil**, Aen.VII.204), meaning "the old man" (TN – mosul), "the ancient god". In some parts of **Scythia** and **Dacia**, Saturn was also called **Papae-os**, word whose original meaning was also "mos" (TN – old man) [1].

[1. “The **Scythians**”, writes **Herodotus** (IV. 59), “call Jove **Papaeos**, as I believe, and the Earth, **Apia**”; and “they believe that the Earth is the wife of Jove”. But it is known that **Ops** or **Opis** (Apia with the Scythians) was the wife of Saturn”.
In ancient Greek language **pappos** means “old man” and this is the exclusive epithet of Saturn. The same word exists also in Latin- **Varro** (L.L.VII. 29). And in **Macedo-Romanian** language **pap aus** also has the meaning of “old man” (**Weigand**, Aromunen, 94.244)].

All these attributes of Saturn were interpreted by antique theology as representing the god of maturity and perfection.
According to the doctrines of Pelasgian theology, Saturn represented in the prehistoric epoch not only the personification of the divine power of the Sky, but he was also venerated as a telluric divinity, as the lord of the underground world. In this quality, Saturn had with the Romans the honorific title **Deus Manus** (C.I.L.VIII.2.9326; **Servius**, V.A.X.198), and **Manes** (Appuleius, De deo Socr.), while under the name of **Mania** was meant the feminine divinity of the other world (**Macrobius**, Saturn I. 7; **Varro**, L.L.IX. 61) [2].

[2. The Pelasgians of Asia Minor (Lydiens) had also preserved the memory of an ancient king of theirs, called **Manes**, son of Jove (meaning Uranos) and Gaea (**Dionysius Halicarn**. I. 27).
But this Manes was the same as **Saturn**, who had ruled not only in Europe, but also over a part of western Asia, as well as in the northern lands of Africa].

Finally, Manes were the spirits of the deceased, whose dwellings were underground, in the empire of Saturn (**Cicero**, De Legibus II.9).

The epithet of **Manus** given to the Pelasgian divinity of Saturn, had initially no other meaning than “big” (TN – **mare**), attribute of his particular dignity and power, as a sovereign god.
With **Hesiod** (Theog. 459), Kronos or Saturn is called ***megas***, and in Latin inscriptions **magnus**. ***Megas*** and **magnus** were the only titles of majesty of prehistoric antiquity.
While Saturn, as divinity of the lower world, had the name of Manus with the Romans, with the Greeks he appears in this quality with the epithet ***Tartaros*** (**Pindar**, Olymp. II. 77).
The term ***Tartaros*** appears in Greek literature as an exotic, barbarian name, exactly as the residence of Saturn, ***Kronou turdis***, was outside the horizon of the Greek world (**Homer**, Iliad, VIII. v. 479).
From its primitive meaning the word ***Tartaros*** was identical with the archaic Latin “**tata**” (in folk Latin language, **Varro**, Non. 81. 5), Greek ***pater*** (TN – father). The labial ***p*** in the Aeolian dialect often changed with ***t***. Tartaros was therefore only a simple northern dialectal form of the word ***pater***, **pater** or **tata**, title of honor and respect given in antiquity to the creator father of the gods and of mankind. (The interspersing of ***r*** in the middle is due to the tendency of assimilating the first syllable with the last, in order to give a more energetic, and at the same time a more mysterious character to this honorific title. In the language of the Osci, the god **Mamers**, or Mars, was also called **Marma** and **Marmar**, **Mamor** and **Marmor** (C.I.L.I.p.9-10).

Saturn was also venerated by the Gauls as a telluric divinity, under the name of **Teutates** (**Lucanius**, Phars. I. 444; **Dionysius Halic**. I. c. 38), which is the same word as the Latin **tata**, the Greek ***tata, tetta*** and the Lituanian **tetis, tetatis**.
With **Homer** (Hymn. in Apoll. v. 335) and **Hesiod** (Theog. v. 851) the names of ***Tartaros*** and ***Kronos*** are identical. And with **Valerius Flaccus** (Argonaut. IV. 258-260), the supreme lord of the other world appears under the name of **Pater Tartarus**, although both these words had in the beginning the same origin and meaning, from a historical and philological point of view.
Finally, as **Suetonius** tells us (Oct. Augustus, c. 70), in a certain part of Rome Apollo was venerated under the name of **Tortor**, a form evidently altered from the archaic **Tartar**-us.

We have examined here, based on the old religious doctrines, the primitive origin and meaning of the word **Tartar-os**, because this name belongs to the prehistoric domain of Dacia. Various mountain peaks in the Romanian countries, from the river Siret to Biharia, and from Biharia to the lands of Moravia, bear even today the names of **Tatal**, **Tatar**, **Tatra**. The origin of these orographic names is neither familiar, nor ethnic. It has nothing to do with personal names of some ancient owners of the mountains. They are only obscure remains of a primitive cult, when the lofty peaks of the Carpathians were consecrated to the supreme divinity of the universe, called “**Tatal**” (TN – Father) [3].

[3. Such are the following names found on the principal summits of the Carpathians: **Tatarul mare** and **Tatarul mic** at the sources of the river Buzeu; **Tatarul**, mountain southwards of Porcesci in Fagaras district; **Tatareu**, mountain southwards of Paring, and another high mountain northeast of Paring; **Tatal**, the peak of the mountain Olanul in Mehedinti district; **Tatoia**, mountain in Banat near the frontier; **Cracu Tatar** in Banat, westwards of Cracu Tutila; **Tartaroiu** or **Tartaroia** in Bihor county; **Tataruk**a, **Tatulski grou** and **Tatulska**, mountains in Maramures district, southeast of Brustura village; **Tartarka** and **Tatarka** in Bucovina, north of Chirli-Baba, and another peak south of this village is called **Omul** (the Man); **Tatar**-havas, northeast of Gyergyo-Ditro in Transilvania; **Totrus**, river which flows from Transilvania to Moldova through the Ghimes pass. It is certain that the mountain where this river had its sources, had once the same name. And south of the pass of Ghimes there is the peak called in Hungarian **Apa**-havas, meaning the mountain of the **father**;
Pliny (III. 20.7) and **Tacitus** (Hist. III. 9) mention a **Tartarus fluvius**, which flew from the Alps into the Pad. In the county Zips in Hungary the highest peak of the Carpathians is called **Tatra**. The same mountain was called in the Middle Ages **Tatur** (Anonymus Belae Regis notarius, c. XVIII). Other two high peaks in the county Turocz and Lyptau have the names of **Fatra** (from the German Vater)].

In the whole of Italy, as **Dionysius of Halikarnassus** (I. 34) tells us, the heights of the mountains and promontories had been dedicated to Saturn. And a ***Kronion oros*** was at Olympia in the Peloponnesus (**Pausanias**, VI. 20.1; **Ptol**. III. 14.15; **Pindar**, Olymp. VIII. 17).
Also, in the lands of Germany, various mountain peaks have even today the names of **Altvater** and **Grossvater** (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, I. 153). In a more remote time, the term **tater** also appears to have been applied to some consecrated mountains of Germany.
In German mythology **tatermann** means **idol, demonic spirit**, and an old dictionary explains this word by **alpinus** (**Grimm**, D. M. I. 470).

In the beginning therefore, the term of **Tartar-os** appears in the northern parts of the Pelasgian territory, especially in Dacia, as a cosmogenic title of the supreme divinity.

Later though, the authority of the word Tartaros diminished, after Saturn was deposed and Jove was accepted as the absolute ruler of the Greek world and the head of its religion.

Greek theology applied then this archaic name of the northern Pelasgians, exclusively to the divinity of the lower world, to the mountains and subterranean caves (**Homer**, Iliad, VIII. 13; Ibid. Hymn in Merc. V. 256; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 740; **Plato**, Phaedo. I. p.88), where, according to legends, Jove had imprisoned Saturn and the Titans, his supporters (**Homer**, Iliad, VIII. 479; XIV. 203.275; **Hesiod**, Theog. v.851; **Stephanus Byz**. v. ***Tartaros***).

Tartaros, with the meaning of height or mountain, appears also in ancient literature.

Plato calls **Tartaros the place near the clouds** (**Suidas**, ***Tartaros***). **Homer** (Iliad. XIV. 279) and **Hesiod** (Theog. 851) call the Titans ***'Ypotartarioi***, word which in this form has the meaning of: the Titans, who dwell under the mountain Tartaros, as Homer also calls the city of Thebes, under the mountain Placos, ***'Ypoplachie*** (Iliad, VI. 397).

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4. Saturn worshipped in Dacia under the name Zalmox-is or Zeul-mos. His simulacrum at the Iron Gates.

Apart from the honorific title of "**tatal**" (TN – father), which Saturn had in the religion of ante-Hellenic times, as personification of the supreme divinity of the sky and the earth, one of his most popular epithets, with all the Pelasgian tribes from the south and north of Istru, was that of "**mos**" (TN – old man).

He was called by the Latins **Saturnus senex** (**Virgil**, Aen. VII. V. 180; **Ovid**, Fast. V. v. 629), as he was attributed by ancient traditions a patriarchal age (**Cicero**, N. D. II. 25), **deus vetus** (**Virgil**, Aen. VII. V. 204), **Deus Majus** (**Macrobius**, Saturn. I. 12).

According to **Ovid** (Fast. V. 72-75) and **Varro** (L. L. VI. 33), the name of the month **Majus** meant "**mosi**" (TN – old men). In the language of the Osci, Majus had the form **Maesius** and **Moesius** (**Festus**, De verb. Signif.), word even closer in form to the Romanian "**mos**".

Saturn was called by the Greek Pelasgians with the epithet ***presbites*** (**Eschyl**, Eumenides, v. 638) and ***polios***, and by the Trojans, **Jupiter avus** (**Virgil**, Aen. VII. v. 219-220).

The Phrygians called him ***Zeus*** (s. ***theos***) ***'Atis*** (**Psellos**, p.109. Boiss. at **Tomaschek**, Die alten Thraker, II. 42), the Scythians ***Papaios*** (**Herodotus**, I. IV. c. 59), and on the territory of Germany he was called **Altvater** and **Grossvater** (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, p.153), all of these names having the same meaning, of "**Mos**" (TN – Old man).

This epithet indicated Saturn as a **mortal** man, as the ideal author of their national life, moral and political, as the genealogical originator – **principium generis** – of the ancient Pelasgian dynasties and noble families [1].

[1. The **Trojans** claimed their origin from the Old God, "**Zeul Mos**" (**Virgil**, Aen. VII.219-220).
Varro (R.R.III.1) calls the **farmers of Italy** the last of Saturn's nation.
For **Virgil** (Aen. VII. 203), the Latins are **gens Saturni**, meaning descendants of the old god. And **Horatio** (Od. I. 12. 50) calls Augustus: **Orte Saturno**].

The **Latin** king, addresses the ambassadors of Aeneas, with the following words: "Do not avoid our hospitality, do not ignore the **Latins, the nation of Saturn, who are righteous people not as a result of punishment or laws**, and who preserve even today the ancestral institutions from the times of the **old God** (**mos**), by their goodwill and their inclination" (**Virgil**, Aen. VII. v. 177-188; Ibid, 202-205).

This same title of Old God, **Zeul Mos** ("deus vetus" or "avus") was also given to Saturn by the **Dacians**.

The historian **Mnaseas of Patrae**, who lived in the 3rd century bc, tells us that the Getae venerated **Saturn**, whom they called **Zamolxis** (**Photius**, Fragm. Hist. Graec. III. p.153).

Similarly, **Diogenis Laertius** writes (VIII) that the Getae call Saturn Zamolxis, and **Hesychius** says ***Zalmoxis o Kronos***.

The form ***Zalmoxis***, which appears with **Herodotus**(lib. IV. c. 96), **Porfirius** (De vita Pythagorae, c. 14) and Hesychius (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie), as well as in various manuscripts of Plato and Suidas, is acknowledged to be the most correct.

But the word has remained to this day without an explanation based on positive historical and etymological facts.

By the ancient customs of the Saturnian religion, the name of Zalmoxis could not be anything else but a simple hieratic epithet of Saturn, an attribute with the same meaning of senex, deus vetus, deus avus, ***Papaios***, ***presbites***, Majus (or Maesius), which Saturn also had with other Pelasgian tribes. The word **Zal-mox-is** meant nothing else but **Zeul-mos** (TN – the old man God) in the language of the Dacians, from the point of view of its etymology and meaning. The ending ***is*** represents here, as in other similar cases, just a simple Greek suffix.

In reality, the language of the Getae and the Dacians had a **proto-Latin** character; it formed just a branch or a particular rustic dialect of the Pelasgian language, as we will have occasion to be convinced by the historical research done for this work.

The Greek authors have transmitted various explanations of the word Zalmoxis.

Some of these, although knowing very well the real meaning of the word, as results from their writings, gave it only general interpretations.

Lucian (lib. XXIV.C. 4), one of the most interesting writers of antiquity, distinguished for his spirit and erudition, calls Zalmoxis ***patroos theos***, meaning "**parental god**" or "**ancestral**". **Herodotus** (lib. IV. c. 94 and 96) calls him ***daimon epichorios*** (deus indigena), and **Plato** (Charmides, Ed. Didot, Tom. I. p.505) calls him a ***basileus theos***).

This interpretation of Plato had a positive basis. In prehistoric antiquity, the founders of states made the object of a particular cult of respect. The king, founder of the state and colonizer of uninhabited lands, was considered as a common **proto-parent**, as a public **Mos** (according to **Manetho**, the dynasty of **Mosi**, **Manes**, had reigned over Egypt for 5813 years), or **Lar** (**Lares**, word which in the beginning expressed the same idea as **Manes**), for all the future generations.

So we see that some authors of antiquity have interpreted a part of the name **Zal-mox-is** by the word ***theos***, and the rest by the epithets ***patroos, epichorios*** and ***basileus***, less adequate to the real meaning.

Zal, in the language of the Dacians, by meaning and form, is identical with the Romanian word **zeu**, or **zeul**, while ***mox*** is our word **mos**, **majus** in the old Latin language, the **maesius** and **moesius** of the Osci. Finally, the Pelasgian tribes of Italy had also a popular form (ante-Roman) of "**mos**", with the meaning of **memoria veterum**.

We find the archaic word **zeu** or **zeul** used as a national term in the Pelasgian lands of Thrace and Mesia, even at the time of the Roman Empire.

On an inscription discovered in Upper Mesia, close to Scopia, there is a dedication addressed to **DEO ZBELTHIURDO** (C.I. L. III. nr. 8191 at **Tomaschek**, Die alten Thraker, II. p.60), or more correct **ZBELTHEURGO**, meaning to the "God, the miracle maker".

In the mountains of Rhodope, a veteran erected at 76ad an altar to **DEO MHDYZEI** (MHDVZEI Desj., MHDIZEI Ren.), where the last word is only an altered form of **Domnudzei** or **Domnidzei**, Romanian **Dumnezeu**, pl. **Dumnezei** (C I. L. III. nr. 6120).

The name **Zal-mox-is**, so mysterious in modern historical literature, belongs therefore to the primitive Pelasgian dialect of Dacia. It was just a simple honorific and respectful title of the supreme divinity, the same combined expression as **Zeul-mos** (Deus avus) in Romanian language; only the form under which the Greek authors have transmitted it was altered.

Zal-mox-is or **Zeul-mos**, in the cult of the **Dacians** and **Thracians** (**Lucian**, lib. XXIV. 1.4; lib. XXIV. 42), represented therefore the same great divinity of prehistory who was also venerated by the Scythians under the name of ***Zeus Papaios***, by the Trojans as **Jupiter avus**, and who appears on the banks of the Tiber under the name of **Saturnus senex, deus vetus, Deus Majus** [2].

[2. The same **historical traditions** about both **Zal-mox-is** and **Saturn** have existed in both Greece and Italy during antiquity. Saturn, Latin religious traditions said, had once disappeared from the sight of the people (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 7). Saturn is a **deus in statu abscondito**, un **latens deus** (**Virgil**, Aen. VIII. 321); **Ovid**, Fast. I. 236).

In particular the Greek theogonies tell us that Jove, after ousting Saturn from old Olympus, imprisoned him in **a vast subterranean space**, called “Tartaros”, together with the **Titans**, the ancient representatives of the Pelasgian race.

Herodotus had heard the same about **Zal-mox-is**, that this man-god (***andropos-daimon***) had disappeared suddenly, in front of the eyes of the Thracians (Getae), and had spent some time in a subterranean dwelling (lib. IV. c. 95).

Zal-mox-is travels through Egypt, and Saturn appears in all historical traditions as also reigning at the same time over Egypt and over a large part of Libya.

Hesiod calls Saturn an “astute”. The same character is also attributed by the Greek authors to **Zal-mox-is**. Finally, Saturn was honored during archaic times with human sacrifices, **virorum victimis** (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 7), and the Getae, as **Herodotus** writes, sent one of them every five years with a mission to **Zal-mox-is**, in the sky, to ask for whatever they needed].

As god of the sky and the heights, Saturn or Zeul-mos of Dacia, had his altars, simulacra and annual sacrifices in the mountains.

At the most important point in the southern range of the Carpathians, near **the Iron Gates**, on the coast called **Sfantul Petru** (TN. – Saint Peter), the traveler notices even today the bust of a human figure, of a huge size, hewn in rock by the hand of prehistoric man.

I saw and examined myself, in the summer of 1899, this human representation on this fine promontory of the Danube. Seen from any side, this figure shows a mysterious man with his sheepskin coat on his back, in an attitude as if he climbed uphill.

The folk legends call this megalithic figure “**Mos**”, and at the same time tell us that a long time ago a group of 9 human figures existed here, sculpted in rock, generally called “Babe”, out of which 8 had been destroyed in later times, during the building works of the national road which passes under this hill towards Verciorova. (Tradition heard in the village Gura-Vaii, on the territory of which this simulacrum stands. TN – today here is the site of the great hydro-electric dam on the Danube).

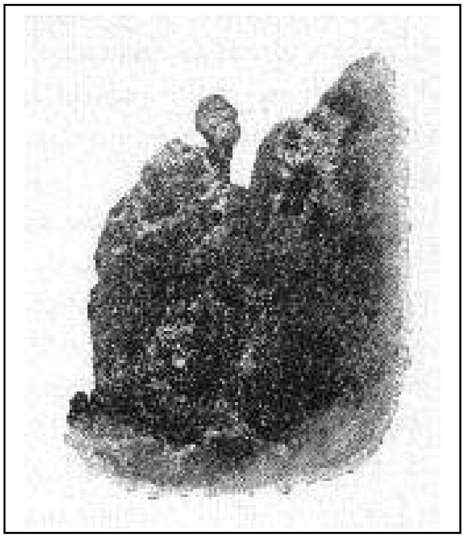
By the name it bears, by the ideas and the religious practices of ancient times, this figure sculpted in rock near the Cataracts of the Danube presents one of the most important prehistoric monuments of the country, the simulacrum of **Saturn**, called in Dacian times **Zalmox-is** or **Zeul-Mos**. By its position at the most important point of the Carpathians and the Danube, this simulacrum seems to have had in antiquity a particular significance.

It represented the great divinity of the country, under whose special tutelage were the straits of the **Iron Gates**, and this explains why, during the Christian era, the name of **Sf. Petru** was given to the hill on which this simulacrum stands.

This had been one of the rules of the religious institutions of Pelasgian times, the sanctuaries and simulacra of Saturn had to dominate the passes of the mountains, which served as natural gates of the lands beyond.

“As the authors tell us”, writes **Varro** (L. L. V. 42), “on the site where today is the mountain Capitol, in ancient times was the city called Saturnia, out of which still exist three old

buildings, a **temple of Saturn in the straits of the mountains**, a **gate** once called **Saturnia** and today **Pandana**, and finally, a **gate** at the back of the temple of Saturn".



The simulacrum of **Zalmoxis** (**Zeul Mos**), on the hill called Sf.Petru, near the **Iron Gates** (Romania, Mehedinti district, Gura-Vaii village).
(From a photograph taken in 1899).

Near the Iron Gates of the Carpathians there existed in antiquity, and still do, the dangerous **Cataracts** of the Danube, that barrier of rocks which rise from the depths of its bed and produce a formidable speeding of the current and violent eddies.
The archaic figure on the coast of the hill, called today Sf. Petru, represented also in antiquity the protective divinity of the sailors who navigated through this strait, so dangerous for the navigation with oars and sails.
Earlier than the gods of the Greek Olympus, Saturn alone was the one who had ruled over the sky, the earth and the waters. It was he who calmed the storms, who calmed the waves, who protected the sailors from accidents on water.
The age of this monument from the Iron Gates and the Cataracts of the Danube, once so religious, goes back, according to the legends about which we will speak later, to the times antedating the Argonauts.

Such primitive simulacra, which represented Zeul-mos, the great protector of Dacia, have existed without doubt in other parts of the Carpathians too. Various hills and mountain peaks from the territory of our countries have even today the significant names of "**Mos**", "**Virful Mosului**" (TN – the Peak of the Old man), "**Piscul Mosului**", obscure reminiscences that once these heights had been consecrated to the cult of Saturn, to this great representative of prehistoric religion and civilization.

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5. Saturn as *Zeus Dachie* and Dokius Caeli filius.

During Graeco-Roman antiquity, Saturn appears to have been also worshipped as ***Zeus Dachie***, as supreme divinity of Dacia.
The Pelasgians, as **Herodotus** tells us, had in the beginning no particular names for their divinities, but they simply called them ***Theous***, **zei**, gods (lib. II. c. 52).
These names of ***theos*** and **deus**, which in the beginning had been attributed to Uranos and Saturn, as personifications of the divinity of the sky and the earth, were later replaced in the public cult with the expressions of ***Zeus*** and **Jupiter** (**Macrobius**, Saturn. I. 10).
In fact though, the Greek ***Zeus***, with its forms of ***Dis***, ***Deus*** (Eolian) and ***Sdeus*** (Beotian), as well as the Latin **Jupiter** (**diu'piter, divus pater, deus pater**), were only simple appellations (**Stephani**, Thesaurus, 1). **Agamemnon** was also honored with the name of ***Zeus*** (**Lykophron**, Alex. v.1124) and so was **Hercules** (**Aelianis**, H. A. XvII.40), while **Aeneas** was named **Jupiter** (**Preller-Jordan**, R.M.I. 94; II.321).
From the historical point of view of the beliefs, as well as the ritual, ***Zeus Dodonaios Pelasgichos*** from Epirus (**Homer**, Iliad, XVI. v.233), ***Zeus Peloros*** (**Batonis Sinopensis**, Fragm. Hist. Graec. IV. 349; **Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, p.592), or ***'Omoloios*** from Thessaly and Beotia (Suidas), ***Zeus Papaios*** of the Scythians (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. c.59), **Jupiter avus** of the Trojans (**Virgil**, Aen. VII.v.219-220) and **Jupiter Latiaris**, worshipped on the mountain Alban, did not represent the god of the third generation, the Hellenic Jove of the theomachy, who had usurped the throne of Saturn, but **the great God of the Pelasgian nation**, the divinity of light and atmospheric phenomena, to whom Saturn was assimilated, the historic representative of the tilling of the earth, of prosperity and abundance.

The most famous cult of the great "**Pelasgian god**", as known by history to this day, was at **Dodona** in the Epirus. But much more famous and ancient was the cult of the "**too good and too great god**" of the **Abi** and the **Agavi**, from the north of Thrace, the most just of all men, towards whom Jove turns his eyes from Troy (**Homer**, Iliad, XIII.v.6). These Abi and Agavi, by their sweet mores and their dwellings at the north of the Istru, belonged to the large family of the pious **Hyperboreans**, to whose hecatombs came all the gods (**Homer**, Iliad, I.v.423; XIII. v.106; **Pindar**, Pyth. X.v.33; **Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, Aethiopia).
We find authentic traces of the extended cult of the great divinity of Dacia, until late in the historical epoch.
Even from the most obscure times of prehistory, various pastoral Pelasgian tribes emigrated from the Lower Danube, and after passing over Thrace, over Hellespont and Phrygia, settled in the lands of **Cappadocia** in Asia Minor, near the mountains called Taurus, Anti-Taurus, Amanus, and near the sources of the Euphrates. These colonies of mountain shepherds,

descended from the heights of the Carpathians, took also with them the sacred memory of the supreme divinity venerated in their country. Even around the beginning of the Christian era, they worshipped in Cappadocia the great God from the north of the Istru, called by them ***Zeus Dachie***, and this **Zeus Dacie** had with them a particular pontificate (**Strabo**, Geographica (Ed. Didot), lib. XII. 2.5).

One characteristic belief of all the Pelasgian tribes was that their national God listens and understands better their prayers and needs.

Apart from the archaic cult of **Zeus Dacie**, we find at the Pelasgians of Cappadocia another religious reminiscence from their European country.

They said, according to what **Pausanias** tells us (lib. III. 16.8), that the sacred image of **Diana**, so much venerated in Taurica (Crimea), was in their possession. Finally, they also venerated the great divinity of the Earth, the "Great Mother", under the name of ***Ma*** (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. XII. 2. 3).

Apart from their religious beliefs and traditions, their idiom also had a very pronounced Pelasgian character. Part of the localities occupied by these Pelasgians of Cappadocia, as we can ascertain from the writings of antiquity, had the names of: **Cerasus, Morthula, Gauraena, Campae, Corna, Corne, Domana, Orsa, Dascusa, Dagusa** (**Ptolemy**, lib. V.c.6)**, Dacora** (**Sozomenis**, Hist. eccles. VII.17)**, Rimnena or Romnena** (**Strabo**, Geographica, Ed. Didot, lib. XII. 1. 4). A river is called **Apsorrhus** (**Ptolemy**, lib. V. 6; Romanian "apsora", diminutive for water, apa) and a mountain **Scordicus** (**Ptolemy**, lib. V.6.; **Scordisci**, people in Upper Pannonia, **Scardus**, mountain of Illyria).

The Romans treated them as friends and allies, gave them all the freedoms they asked for, even the right to have a king of their own (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. XXXI. 19; **Strabo**, Geogr. lib.XII. 2. 11), while the emperor Claudius founded in Cappadocia a Roman colony in the city named Archelais (**Pliny**, H.N. VI.3.1). These are very eloquent testimonies about their Pelasgo-Latin character.

But primitive traces of the religion, whose powerful centre had once been in the Carpathians of Dacia, appear not only on the territory of Cappadocia.

The cult of Zeus Dacie was also dominant even from the most obscure times, in **Crete**, the large and fertile island of the Mediterranean. The most ancient inhabitants of this island were Pelasgian of origin, as their traditions, beliefs, cult and institutions attest.

Diodorus Siculus tells us that they were called **Dactyli**, meaning **Dactuli**, mountain tribes identical with the **Corybanti** (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. X. 3.7. seqq), the sons of Saturn. (**Stesimbrotus**, contemporary of Pericles, considers the **Dactyli** as the sons of Zeus, and the **Corybanti** as descendents of Saturn – Frag. Hist. Graec. II p.57 – exactly as the **Latins** called themselves Saturni gens - **Virgil**, Aen. VII. 203). Their particular weapons were the

bow and arrows (**Plato**, Vol.II, Ed.Didot, p.263; **Pausanias**, lib. I. 23. 4), and they were the first people in those parts who extracted metals from the earth and processed them.
The inhabitants of Crete represented their great Zeus surrounded by the seven stars of **Ursa Major**, until late in the historical epoch (**Duruy**, Hist. de Grecs, I. p.187), a hieratical symbolic expression of their worship of the supreme divinity of the Pelasgians from the north of Istru.
The authors of antiquity considered that under **Ursa Major** dwelt the **Getae** and the **Scythians**.
The poet **Ovid**, in his sad elegies from Tomis, writes (Trist. Lib. V. 3.v.7-8) that he dwells in a barbarian land, on the shores of the Black Sea, under **the constellation of Ursa**, **where live the Getae and the Scythians**. And with St.Paulinus, the **Dacians** are the ones who dwell under the constellation of Ursa Major (**Coleti**, Illyricum sacrum. Tom. VIII. P.81).

It is the same religious tradition which dominated in Cappadocia and in Crete.
These tribes of shepherds and mine workers, removed from the Carpathians during the times of power and expansion of the Pelasgian race, had still kept as inheritance the cult and institutions of the religion of Zeus Dacie, exactly as the inhabitants of **Delos** and **Delphi** worshipped with a special fervor Apollo the Hyperborean, called also **Apollo Dicaeus** (**Pliny**, H. H. lib. XXXIV.c.19.10), where **Dicia** was only a geographical variant of the name Dacia (C.I. L. **III**, p.169).
This ***Zeus Dachie*** appears also with the name of **Dokius filius Caeli** in the ancient traditions of the Pelasgians, who, as **Gellius** tells us, had been the first to teach the people to build edifices from clay (**Pliny**, H. N. VII. 57.4). By his genealogy and by his civilizing role, this Dokius filius Caeli was identical with Saturn, the son of the Sky, of the Greek theogonies. Dokius is a simple eponym, he was a genial representative of the Pelasgian race of Dacia, exactly as **Scythes,** the son of Jove, who had invented the bow and arrows (Ibid. lib. VII. 57.9), indicates by his name, that his country of origin was **Scythia**.

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6. Saturn honored in the archaic cult with the name *'Omolos* (Omul).

In the public cult and the folk traditions of antiquity, Saturn had also the epithet of ***'Omolos***, a name which presents a special importance for the history of the primitive times of Dacia.
According to the Greek writers (**Ephorus**, Frag. Hist. graec. I. 256), in the north-east parts of **Thessaly**, near the valley Tempe, a high mountain, the most fertile and rich in springs, was called from immemorial times ***'Omolos***,. Certainly, on one of its highest peaks had once existed a simulacrum of this **Homol-os**.

But not only in Thessaly, which formed a Pelasgian territory par excellence, but in Beotia also, a province inhabited in the beginning by barbarians, as Strabo says, the high divinity of the physical and moral world was called ***Zeus 'Omoloios*** (**Suidas** – The epithet of Homoloios given to Jove was not understood by the authors of antiquity. Only Pausanias connected it with the mountain Homolos of Thessaly).

We find the same name in the northern parts of Europe. In the oldest German poems the supreme god of the German tribes, **Wodan** or **Guodan**, is named "**Omi**" (**Grimm**, Deutsche Mythologie, I. 131) [1].

[1. The divinity **Omi** was also called **Mann** in German language. **Grimm** explains this **Mannus** as "homo". The German mythographers and historians could not find to this day a justified etymological and historical explanation of the word **Tuisto**. Doubtless, this word could have no other meaning but that of **Tatal** (TN – the Father). In folk Romanian language, which has conserved to this day a real wealth of archaic Pelasgian words, **Tutu** (TN – read **Tutsu**) means **Tata**. In ante-historical times the Pelasgians had formed a quite extended ethnic stratum in Germany. We find the same divinities, **Tuisto** and **Mannus** (**Omi**), or **Tatal** and **Omul**, borrowed from the Pelasgians and worshipped by the Germans, mentioned even today in an archaic Romanian folk poem].

Around the end of the 5th century, queen Clotilda of the Francs, wishing to convince her husband, king Clodovic I, to receive the Christian religion, addressed him, according to what **Grigorie de Tours** tells us (II. 29-31; and **Grimm**, D.M.I. 96), the following words: "The gods you venerate are figures sculpted in stone, in wood, or in metals, and the names you give to these gods are "**men**" (TN – **omeni**) and not "gods".

It is a positive fact that under this mysterious name of ***'Omolos***, which represented an ante-Homeric divinity, ancient Greek and Roman literature understood **Saturn**.

Tertullianus, who knew deeply the pagan folk beliefs (Apolog. 10), and **Minutius Felix**, his contemporary (Octavio, p.26**; Lactantius**, I. 13), tell us that all the writers of antiquity, both Greek and Roman, called **Saturn "homo".**

We find the same proof with the epigraphic monuments. On an inscription from Numidia it is mentioned a **Homvllivs Satvrninvs** miles legionis III Aug (C.I. L. VIII. Nr. 1875); on another inscription from the Provincia proconsularis we find a woman called **Homvlia Satvrnina** (C.I. L. VIII. Nr. 1643), meaning that even here the barbarian names of Homvllivs and Homvlia were interpreted in the Latin language with Satvrninus and Stavrnina.

Also, in the ancient traditions of Thessaly had been preserved a particular memory about a "**Gigangic Man**" (TN – **Om**), whose principal feast days were the **Saturnalia** (**Batonis Sinopensis**, Fragm.4). This archaic name of ***'Omolos*** was later replaced in some parts of Greece and Asia Minor with the term ***andros*** [2].

[2. **Andros**, island south-east of Eubea, once called **Ant-andros**;
Antandros, Pelasgian city under the mountain Ida, on the territory of ancient Troy. The meaning of this name is "in front of the Man (Om)". **Mela** gives the same explanation (I. 18): **Antandros** means "**in front of Andros**", or "**in front of the Man** (**Om**)"].

The meaning is the same, but we cannot know for sure if the origin of the word ***andros*** is Greek or Pelasgian (in the Romanian language **Andru** appears today only as a suffix, for example baietandru, copilandru – TN: older boy, older child). The ancient Greeks called the icon of a man, and especially the statues and columns, ***andrias***.
Finally, the month of December, which at Romans was entirely consecrated to Saturn, bears even today at the Romanian people the name of **Andrea** or **Indrea** (**Marian**, Holly days at the Romanians, I. p.97), or in other words it is "**the month of the Man**" (TN – luna **Omului**), or of the "feast of the Man" (TN – sarbatoarea Omului).

On the basis of this positive data, we can draw here the following conclusion:
The word ***'Omolos*** appears in Pelasgian antiquity as a general name, given to the first simulacra sculpted on the rocks of the mountains, which represented in human forms the supreme divinity of the religion. These figures of the public cult, as well as the name of "**Omul**" given them, emphasize the fact that the Pelasgian religion was the first to introduce in Europe the rudimentary images of the gods in human forms.

In Greek-Roman antiquity, Saturn was represented with a Pelasgian rustic figure, as an old man with a white beard, with hair reaching to his shoulders (intonsus avus), his head covered with a sort of veil, sometimes wearing sandals on his feet (after a bronze figurine from the Louvre museum) and bent down by the weight of his great age. In his right hand he had, as attribute of him, an instrument for cutting, called by Greek authors ***drepanon*** (**Hesiod**, Theog. I. 162), or ***arpe*** (Ibid. I. 179), which **Hesiod** describes as "angular" and "gigantic".
This characteristic emblem of the old god was called **falx** by the Romans and was assimilated to **the sickle**, as symbol of agriculture (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. c.7; **Ovid**, Fast. V. 627; **Martial**, XI. 6).

The origin of this iconic representation of Saturn goes back to prehistoric times.
One of the most important megalithic monuments of Gaul, presents Saturn in the shape of a menhir or a conical stone, covered on his head and forehead with a cloak which covers his whole body. On its face are represented the sun and the moon, because Saturn, as divinity of the universe was also venerated as the god of light (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 22).
And as distinctive attribute of his worldly power, this figure from Gaul had at his waist an archaic axe, or a large hammer.

In Romanian folk traditions has been preserved to this day the memory of the name "**Omul**", which Saturn had in the ancient religion, as well as that of his rustic emblem. Namely, in the form of a short legend in verse, the **remains** of an ancient folk theogony called "**The big reckoning**" were preserved, to which a particular holy power is attributed when recited.

By its contents, this genealogical poem was a sort of "Enumeratio deorum". It contained in successive order the name, origin and deeds of the various divine generations.

This folk poem begins by presenting Saturn under the name **Omul Mare** (TN – the Big Man), exactly as he had been venerated once as ***'Omolos*** by the Thessalians. As symbolic attributes of his worldly power and reign, **Omul mare**, also called **Dumnezeu**, has in Romanian traditions a "**big hatchet**" or a "**hammer**" at his waist [3].

[3. The **hatchet** was a primitive weapon, it represented the insignia of power, the scepter of that time. The **Roman fasces**, emblem of the power of the empire, which were born in front of the ancient kings, and during the republic, in front of the consuls, dictators, praetors, etc, also had a **hatchet** in their middle. The Roman pontiffs also had a hatchet as historical insignia (**Preller**, R. M. II. p.135). The god **Ramman** of the Assyrians, a divinity of Pelasgian origin, identical with **Jupiter Ruminus** of the Latins, the father of rains and atmospheric changes, was also shown sitting on a mountain, supporting the sky with his head, and holding an **axe** in his hand (**Maspero**, Egypte et Chaldee, p.662)].

This "**Big Man**" (TN – Om mare) of Romanian traditions is descended from the "**Father from the Sky**" (TN – Tatal din Ceriu). He appears as **the first founder of religion**. He is the first to build a big church of wood, with 3 or with 9 altars, the most sacred temple of Pelasgian traditions, whose history has vanished, but which appears to have been much more primitive than the White Monastery from the island of the Black Sea [4].



Simulacrum of the supreme divinity, representing **Saturn** or the Big Man (**Omul-mare**), discovered in the Neolithic grave from Collorgues (Southern France, dep. Gard). *(From **Fraipont**, les caverns, p.221).*

[4. From **the Father high up in the sky, high**,
A big cloud rised up,
From the big cloud,
A big Man emerged, **with a big hatchet**,

And from the big Man,
A big forest emerged, with a big piece of wood,
And from the big piece of wood,
A big splinter was cut, and **a big church was made**,
With 9 altars, with 9 little altars …

*(**G. Catana**, Valea Dienei, Banat)*

Around our place, says G. Catana, this folk prayer is also called "**The big reckoning**", and is said at the death bed of a sick person. If the person who recites it stumbles or makes a mistake, it is believed that the sick man will die, and if he recited if fluently, the sick will get well.

There was a big Man, he went to the big forest
With a big axe, to cut a big piece of wood,
To make a big monastery, with 9 doors, with 9 altars …

*(Haverna village, Dorohoi district, cf.**Sevastos**, Tales, p.81)*

These archaic Pelasgian theogonies seem to have served as model and also as principal sources for the poem of **Hesiod**. There exists also another remarkable resemblance. While the main goal of Hesiod's Theogony is the victory of Jove over Saturn and the Titans, "The big reckoning" firstly glorifies **the big Man**, and in the second part of this poem, under the influences of the Christian cult, celebrates the divine triumph of Jesus over the Jews.

The word "**Om**" (TN – Man, human being) represented in antiquity a high divine power.
The prophet **Daniel** (c.7.13) says that he saw in his visions "the **son of Om**", who came on **the clouds of the sky** and took the reign, the glory, and the kingdom from "**the one, old in days**".
Even Jesus is called "**the son of Om**" (**Mathew**, c.16, 27-28), as Jove also had the epithet of "**Homoloios**", or the son of Om.
On the territory of ancient Dacia, various mountain peaks have once been consecrated to the **Omul** divinity. Such names, as we still find today, are the following: **Virful Omului** (TN – the peak of Man), the highest point of the Bucegi mountains; **Omul de petra** (TN – the Man of stone), mountain in Arges district, SE of the rural village Caneni; **Delul Omului** (TN – the Hill of the Man), NW of the village Bala-de-sus, Mehedinti district; **Virful Omului**, mountain on the territory of the village Brosceni, Suceva district.
Archaic simulacra with the name of "**Omul**" seem to have once also existed in the upper parts of Italy. **Anonymus of Ravenna** and the geographer **Guido** mention the locality called "**Omula**" near the Alps, in Galia Transpadana (Ed. Pinder, p.251, 458).

We talked in this chapter about Saturn as divinity, because we must know the character of the ancient simulacra of Dacia. About the other names and legends of this powerful monarch of prehistoric times, about his country and his political deeds, we shall talk later, in the history of the Pelasgian empire].

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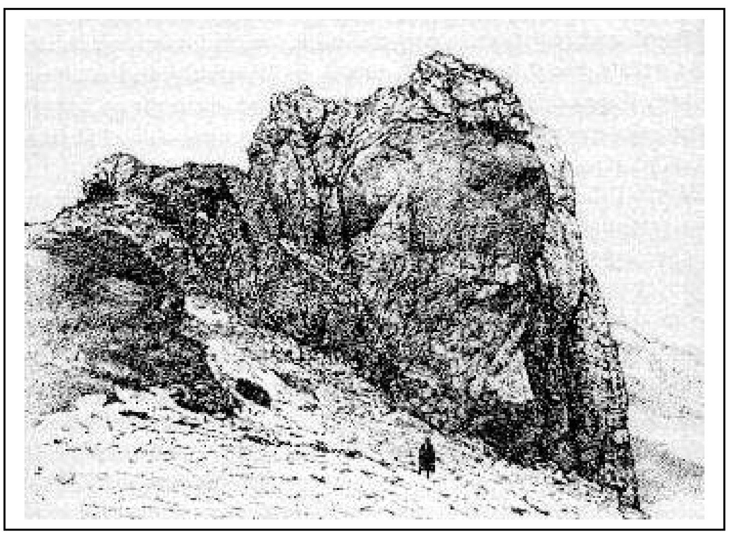
XII. 7. Saturn as *Zeus aristos megistos euruopa, aigiochos.*
His colossal simulacrum on Omul mountain in the Carpathians.

The most important mountain in the southern range of the Carpathians is **Bucegi**.

This mountain, which is set apart by its majestic height and by the expansion of its horizon, was once very famous. In prehistoric antiquity this was the **holy mountain** of the Pelasgian pastoral tribes, for which the extensive plains from the north of Istru were as important as the valleys and crests of the Carpathians. (This is the same mountain which the **Dacians** considered as **holy**, as **Strabo** writes – VII. 3. 5)

The two highest peaks of this mountain bear even today the names of **Caraiman** and **Omul**, and both were once consecrated to the supreme divinities of the Pelasgian race, one to **Cerus manus**, ***megas Ouranos***, the other to **Saturn**, also called "**Omul**" (TN – the Man).

On the highest point of Omul mountain, rises a **gigantic column**, usually covered in clouds, and on another peak in its proximity there still exists today the most important **simulacrum** of the prehistoric world, a human representation sculpted in live rock, of a truly formidable size. This titanic figure from the mountains of ancient Dacia, once called of the Hyperboreans, show, by all its characteristics, the image of the **supreme divinity** of the Pelasgian times [1].



The great simulacrum of **Saturn** as ***Zeus aristos megistos euruopa, aigiochos***, Sculpted in a rock, on the peak of **Omul** mountain, the highest point on the SE arch of the Carpathians*. (From a photo taken by Prof. Em. Le Marton from Rennes, in the year 1900).*

[1. **Em. Le Marton** writes about the position and geological constitution of this rock: It represents a steep slope on **the south side of the peak called Omul**, which is the culminant point of the massif of **Bucegi**. It can be seen that the rock….is of a formidable size, by the human figure which is about twenty meters in front of it ….The rock ….is composed of three parts, the upper part (above the forehead) is the remainder of a huge calcareous block, similar to the lower part (from the mouth down). Between the two is seen a conglomerate of sandstone, which forms a band (the forehead and cheeks)…]

According to the religious ideas of the Pelasgians, the great God of this race was shown intentionally in gigantic forms, so that by the enormous size of the simulacrum it could express at the same time the power and majesty of this divinity.
Because of this, the supreme divinity of the Pelasgian religion, the god of thunder, lightning and rain, the one who shook the earth, who fertilized the fields, the valleys and the mountains, had also the epithet ***Peloros***, the **Gigant or the big Man** (**Om**), and this Peloros was considered by the Tessalians as identical with **Saturn**. Their great feasts of Saturnalia were called **Peloria**, meaning feasts of the "**gigantic Om**" or the "**big Om**" (**Batonis Sinopensis**, De Thessalia, frag. 4, in Fragm. Hist. graec. IV.p.349; **Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, p.592).

The great god of **Homer**'s Iliad (VIII.v.19-27), wanting to give the other Olympians an idea about the immensity of his physical power, addresses them like this:
"Listen to me all, gods and goddesses, as I want to tell you what is in my heart. Over my word nobody should pass, neither goddess, nor god, but all of you must listen to me, because if I found out that one or other of the gods went in secret to help the Trojans, or the Danaians, they will return beaten and shamed to Olympus, or I will catch them, and throw them in the dark and remote Tartaros, where there is a very deep abyss underground, there, where the **Iron Gates** are, and the **Copper Threshold**, and then they will know that I am the most powerful of all gods. But if you gods wished so, try your luck, so that you would be convinced. Bring a gold chain and tie it on Uranos (with the meaning of mountain), then let all gods and goddesses get a hold on it, and, no matter how hard you will try, you will not be able to drag from Uranos to **the plain**, your highest master and god; but when I will decide to grab the chain, then I will instantly pull you up, and the earth and the sea, and I will tie the chain on the peak of **Olympus** and everything will stay airborne, this is how much superior I am than the gods and men".
These words, which Homer had certainly extracted from the ancient ballads of the nomad minstrels, refer in fact to the holy mountains about which we are talking here.

The **Olympus of the Iliad** is not the Olympus of Thessaly, but the **ancient Olympus** from near ***Okeanos Potamos*** or Istru, where the "**Origin of the gods**" was (**Homer**, Iliad, XIV.v.199-205), "at the ends of the earth, which fed many people". The Olympus and Uranos of Homer are the holy mountains of theogony, ***Ourea macra*** (**Hesiodus**, Theog.v.129, 113), where Uranos, Gaea and Saturn had their residence (**Homer**, Iliad, VIII.v.470 seqq), where the people resembled the gods, and where these Titans warred with one another for the mastery of the world.

At the time of the migrations of Pelasgian tribes from the Carpathians towards the southern lands, the renown and legends of this sacred mountain also descended with them, to all the lands of

Hellada, Asia Minor and down to Egypt. As the civilization and the sweet mores of the Pelasgians had an enormous influence on the Greek people, the same had their beliefs.

The religion of Uranos and Gaea, of Saturn and Rhea, of the Sun and the Moon, or in other words, the entire system of the Pelasgian doctrines, with their names, their legends about the origin of the gods, and their forms of the cult, as it had developed in the principal and powerful centre from the Lower Istru, on the territory of the holy Hyperboreans, emigrated southwards from the Carpathians, at the same time with the Pelasgian tribes.
The colossal figure from the Carpathians of Dacia, which exudes a sovereign expression of dignity and an immense power, could represent only the great national god of the Pelasgian tribes, to whom the most imposing heights of the mountains were everywhere consecrated.

About a similar huge figure, sculpted in a rock near Antiochia, the Greek writer **Ioannis Malalae** tells the following in his Chronography (Bonnae, 1831 p. 205): "During the reign of Antiochus Epiphanus, the king of Syria, being an epidemic in Antiochia and many people dieing, a certain Leios, a man who was learned in religious mysteries, ordered them to sculpt a rock in the mountain which dominated the city. This was a **gigantic head** encircled with a crown, facing the city and that valley. He then wrote something on the head and he put and end this way to the epidemic. The Antiochians call to this day this head **Charonion**".
This Charonion represented in reality ***Zeus charaios*** (**Preller**, Gr. Myth.I. 77), meaning the "**Head of God**", as the high divinity of the sky and earth was presented and worshipped by the Beotians.

So far we've considered this colossus from the Carpathians of Dacia only from the point of view of the religious ideas of prehistoric times. We have now to examine this simulacrum from the point of view of its symbolic characters and its special history.

This majestic figure which dominates even today the most important height of the Carpathians, has two remarkable particularities, which prove that this simulacrum had been considered in the Homeric antiquity the most sacred and ancient image of the supreme divinity.
One of these distinctive particularities of the colossus on Omul, is his **wide face**.
Homer, in one of his hymns, calls the supreme god of the physical and moral world of his times, the "**God most good, most great, and with a wide face**" (***Zana ariston megiston euruopa***).
These are the most ancient, most ritual epithets, with which the powerful divinity of the Pelasgian world was invoked [2].

[2. The authors of antiquity were doubtful about the true meaning of the epithet ***euruopa***, attributed to the great ante-Homeric God, and in modern literature we still cannot find a satisfying explanation.
Some authors derive this epithet from ***oph (opos) = phona***, **voice**, **sound**, translating ***Zeus euruopa*** with **late-sonans**. Others on the contrary, accept that the radical of ***opa*** is reduced to ***oph (opos),*** **eye**,

face, but have interpreted incorrectly this epithet, some with **latioculus, latum habens oculum** (**Stephanus Thes**. I. gr), others with **late-videns**, **late-cernens**. According to the ideas of antique theology though, by the expression ***euruopa*** was meant the shape of the divine figure, the **wide face**, extremely imposing of Jove. So with **Homer**, Juno, addressing Apollo and Iris (Iliad, XV.146), tells them "Jove orders you to come as fast as you can on mount Ida and after you arrived there, to look at his **face**". With **Eschyl** (Suppl. V.1059), Jove also has an **immense face**. Finally we have to add that **Homer** uses the adjective ***euru*** almost everywhere, and only in strict material sense, as for example wide streets, wide forehead, wide river bed, wide space, etc.].

Achilles, addressing a prayer to ***Zeus (Dodonaios) Pelasgichos*** on Troy's plain, calls him at the same time the **Pelasgian God with the wide face and who dwells far away** (**Homer**, Iliad, V. v. 233 – 241).

This "God with the wide face" gave to king **Tros** of Troy, as **Homer** tells us, some horses of the most excellent race, called "immortal horses" by some authors (Iliad, V. v. 265-267).

During the primitive times of history, the horses most renowned for their shape, symmetry and speed, were in the north of Thrace. **Pegasus**, the divine winged horse, was born, according to legends, near the sources (meaning cataracts) of the river Oceanos or Istru (**Hesiod**, Theog.v.293) [3].

[3. The ancients have placed also in the northern hemisphere the **Pegasus constellation**; As it is known, the **Scythians** were in antiquity the most famous riders; The hunting horse of Adrian was called Borysthenes (**Dio Cassius**, lib. LXIX. 10); And the race of horses from Moldova was renowned up to the 18th century for their body, agility and resistance (**Cantemir**, Descriptio Moldaviae, p.32)].

The following words of **Homer** are especially memorable, as they refer to ***Zeus euruopa***:

"**Thetis** (Achilles' mother), departing in early morning, climbed on the **great Uranos**, and on **Olympos**, and here she found the son of **wide-faced Saturn**, sitting separately from the other gods, on the highest point of Olympos, which has many peaks" (Iliad, I. v. 497-499) [4].

[4. It is to be noted that Homer calls here the highest peak of Olympus mountain, on which Jove was seated, ***choruna***, meaning **top**, **head**. Homer also calls ***Choruna*** the peak of Mount Ida, from where Jove followed the Trojan war (Iliad, XIV. 157). And the same name is used by **Hesiod** (Theog. v. 62) for the highest point of Olympus].

This is an important text for the history of those obscure times. And here ***megas Ouranos***, which was in close proximity of Olympos, expresses only the notion of **mountain** (**Aristotle**, De mundo, c.6), but not the infinite space above the earth.

This ***megas Ouranos***, which Thetis climbs first, on her way to Olympus, is from the point of view of rhapsodic geography, identical with **Caraiman**, the imposing mountain of Dacia, consecrated to **Cerus manus**, which appears personified in Romanian legends under the name of **Caraiman, the creator of** "**the first people**", and in Romanian folk incantations, as **Domn** (TN – ruler) **of lightning and thunderbolts, and the great sovereign of the world** [5].

[5. Both with **Homer** (Iliad, I. 197) and **Hesiod** (Theog. v. 689-694), ***Ouranos*** and ***'Olympos*** appear as two heights of the same mountain **chain**. In the battle with the Titans, Jove throws his lightning from Uranos and Olympos at the same time. Because of this lightning, writes Hesiod, the **vast forest** was set

alight all around. Finally, both with Homer and Hesiod, Olympos was a mountain in the northern region, usually covered in snow].

On a coin from the time of Antoninus Pius, **DACIA**, as divinity, is shown holding in her right hand a group of mountains (**Eckhel**, Doctrina numorum, Vol. VII. 5), which without doubt had a religious-historical importance, they were **the holy mountains of Dacia**, ***ieron oros*** of **Strabo**. And the poet **P.Papinius Statius** (Opera quae extant, Lipsiae, 1857), who lived for a long time at the court of Domitian, calls often Dacia only as **verticem** and **montem**.

In **Homer**'s Iliad, the dwellings of the great God are on a physical terrestrial height. Only the palace of ***Zeus*** is on majestic **Olympos**, the other gods dwell on the **valleys of Olympos** (Iliad, XI. 77), and on **Uranos** (Iliad, I. 195; VIII. 365; XX. 299; XXI. 267; Odyss. IV. 378. 439). But the **assemblies of the gods** take place on Olympos, where Jove convokes them especially for this purpose (Iliad, VIII. 3; XX. 4; Odyss. I. 27; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 391).

Similarly, in **Hesiod**'**s** Theogony (v.119), ***Zeus euruopa*** is the god whose residence is on **the sacred Olympos of Uranic times**, from **the most remote "corner" of the earth** (Ibid.v.119), or from the "**black country**" (Ibid.v.69), near the **Ocean** (or Istru) with its deep whirlpools (Ibid, v.514, 884; **Homer**, Iliad, XIV, v.201). ***Zeus euruopa*** is **the god of justice** (**Hesiod**, Opera et Dies, v.229 seqq, 281), he distributes his bounty to the honest and just men, gives prosperity to the cities, abundance to the earth, acorn to the oaks, increases the bees, blesses the sheep flocks, makes the women give birth to children like their parents, and makes the people enjoy in festivities the fruits of their labor, he avenges the wrongdoings, and burns with his lightning the insolents and malefactors (**Hesiod**, Theogony. v. 514).

Another very apparent particularity presented by the archaic type of the great God of Dacia, belongs to the antique symbolism.

On the calm and intelligent forehead of this god, can be seen the natural or artificial traces which represent a split in the head, on the upper part of the skull.

Similar symbolic signs were shown also on the sacred image of the supreme divinity in ante-Homeric theogony.

According to the old Pelasgo-Hellenic legends, **Minerva** (from the root **men**, **mens**, mind) was born from the head of Jove. The poet **Pindar** (Olymp. VII. v. 35-38) transmitted this legend, saying that **Vulcan** had split with his copper hatchet Jove's head ***(Zeus)***, from which Minerva had emerged with such clamor, that the sky and earth were terrified, or, as **Homer** says (Hymn. in Minervam), the earth echoed and the Pontos clouded its purple waves.

During the first times of history, religious beliefs were clothed in symbolism, and all the sacred images of antiquity were characterized by an infinite variety of symbolic attributes.

We ask now, can it be that the origin of this allegorical legend about Minerva's birth from Zeus' head was that figure, so archaic, so worshipped, and so unique in its way?
We think yes! Homer places the origin of all the gods, known and worshipped in Greek lands, in the northern parts of Thrace, at Istru, at ***'Ocheanos potamos.***

The simulacrum of ***Zeus euruopa*** from the great Gate of the Carpathians, presents another important characteristic symbol.
Near the right shoulder of the God, the figure of a **gigantic shield** appears in very regular and well preserved forms. This shield is one of the most principal and archaic attributes of the supreme divinity of the heroic times.
In the oldest monuments of Greek literature, the great God of the Pelasgian world has also the epithet of ***aigiochos***, meaning "**the one who holds the shield**" (**Homer**, Iliad, II. v. 375; V. v. 733; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 11, 13, 25, 735, 920; Opera et Dies, v. 483, Fragm. 124).
Homer's Iliad describes this shield as priceless, which the times could not age, and which will never disappear. From it hung one hundred tassels of gold, very finely woven, each of it valuing one hundred oxen (II. v. 226 seqq). This shield of the powerful God was surrounded all around by religious terrors. On it were represented the "Quarrel", the "Bravery", the "Terrible war tumult" and the Gorgon's head, the sinister and terrible monster (Ibid, V.738 seqq). This shield was made and given to Jove by Vulcan (Ibid, XV, v. 308). But, as results from another place in the Iliad, the shield of great ***Zeus*** was of **stone** or of **rock** (Ibid, XVII. V. 593-594. With Homer, the noun ***marmaros*** had only the simple meaning of **stone, rock**, only later this word came to signify the calcareous, hard and shiny type of the **marble**), and to this particularity seem to refer Homer's words, that time could not age it and it will never disappear.
This was the miraculous shield which inspired on one side the courage in battle, on the other, a martial terror, so that it gave victory to all those in whose camp it was.

According to ancient traditions, Jove first appeared in battle with this shield during the wars with the Titans and the Gigants (TN- I use this term, as the Giants are often confused with the Titans).
In the memorable war fought by the Acheans (Greeks) with the Trojans, Jove sent Apollo to help the Trojans, and lent him this shield, telling him to shake it on the war theatre, so that the terrified Acheans will retire to their ships (**Homer**, Iliad, XI. v. 229). But Minerva, in collusion with Juno, took this shield without Jove's knowledge, ran with it to the Greeks' camp and urged them to war against the Trojans (Ibid, II. v. 447).
Jove's shield, as results from **Homer** (Ibid, V. v.738), was worn on the shoulders, and it appears figured in the same way on the great simulacrum from the Carpathians of Dacia.
Religious beliefs were tightly connected to certain legendary simulacra until late in historical times, simulacra to which the people attributed in its imagination, a supernatural power.

When Homer and Hesiod describe the majestic figure of ***Zeus euruopa aigiochos*** etc, they do not talk about an abstract divine power, but about a real image, a simulacrum consecrated by an ancient religion. (Achilles was doing the same thing, when addressing his prayers to Jove from Dodona).

Minerva, **Homer** tells us (Hymn in MInerv; Iliad, I. 202; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 920, 924), was born from the head of ***Zeus aigiochos***, and these words refer incontestably to the principal simulacrum of ante-Hellenic religion, to the sacred figure, so expressive from all the points of view, of ***Zeus aigiochos*** from the ancient Olympos of theogony, usually covered in snow, from north of the Lower Istru.

We find the same tradition also in Roman theology.

From the important extracts from the sacred books of Roman paganism, transmitted to us by **Cicero**, Minerva, the goddess revered by the Pelasgo-Greek world, was born from Jove and **Coryphe, the daughter of the Ocean** (De nat. Deor. Lib. III. 23).

'Ocheanos potamos, the father of all ante-Hellenic divinities in antique theogonies, is the "**holy**" Istru, which the ancients considered at the same time as "**the greatest river**" of the world; and **Homer** calls Coryphe the highest peak of ancient Olympos (Iliad, I. v. 499), while for **Pindar** Coryphe is Jove's head itself, from which Minerva emerged (Olymp. VII. 36).

We've established therefore from legends, as well as from the characteristics presented by the important simulacrum reproduced above, that Minerva was born from the head of ***Zeus aigiochos***, on the sacred territory of the ancient religion, north of Thrace, in the region of the Istru. Science was Minerva's attribute, and the traditions place her birth in the Carpathians of Dacia, a circumstance also confirmed by Prometheus' legend, about which we shall talk later.

The shield (***aegis***) of great ***Zeus*** from the north of the Istru, had at the same time an extremely important role in the state life of the Pelasgians.

It appears as the symbol of their nation's existence and political independence.

In the memorable war on the shores of Hellespont, this shield appears either in the Trojans' lines, or in the Acheans' camp, according to the side protected by different divinities, the empire of Priam, or the coalition of the Acheans.

The memory of this sacred shield of the great God had been preserved by the Pelasgian tribes that had migrated to Italy, until the times of **Numa**.

King Numa, the first king to organize the public cult of the Romans, wanted, because of traditional reasons which today we can not know anymore, that the new state founded on the shores of the Tiber should possess a protective shield of the great God.

According to what the legends tell us, he, following the counsel of his wife Egeria, asked the all powerful God, **saevus Jupiter** (or **Sabazius Jupiter; Sebazius; Sabadius, Sebadius; Sabus; Savus augustus** – according to **V. Maxim; Macrobius, Silius** Italicus), the Lord of thunder and lightning, to come down from his high residence to Rome, and tell him by what sort of rites and ceremonies will the Romans be able to abate his divine anger in the future. The great national god listened to his prayer and descended from his height to Rome, in the holy grove near Aventin. The peaks of this mountain shook and the earth sank under the God's weight.

Here, the great divinity of the Pelasgians told Numa the ritual sacrifices through which his people could, in times of need, abate or appease the divine anger, and promised at the same time that the next day he will give him a sure sign for the safety of the Roman state. And the next day, when the sun appeared on the horizon in all its glory, and when Numa, at the front of his people had lifted his hands in prayer to the supreme divinity, to send him the promised gift, it was suddenly seen how the sky opened and a shield fell slowly through the air. Numa lifted the shield and brought sacrifices of thanks to the God. Then, remembering that the fate of the Roman empire is connected to this shield, which he called **ancile**, he disposed to have a number of similar shields made, so that the wicked men and enemies could not steal the divine shield, and he gave the care of these holy things to the college of priests called **Salii** (**Ovid**, Fast, III. v. 275 seqq;, **Dionysos Halikar**. Lib. II. c. 71).

As results from this religious tradition, the new Pelasgian state had felt a definite need to put itself under the protective shield of the great national divinity, and Numa, a man learned in all the divine and human sciences (**Livy**, lib. 1. c. 18), knew how to procure for his people such a holy guaranty, given by the powerful god of the Pelasgian nation himself.

From a historical point of view, the origin of this belief was in the lands of the Lower Istru [6].

[6. The **Roman ancile** had, according to **Varro** (L. L. VII. 43), the shape of the **Thracian shields**, and on a bronze coin of the emperor Antonius Pius, they have the shape of an **oval** disc].

In Latium, the most antique religious traditions had been preserved by the inhabitants of Aricia. This Pelasgian tribe of the Aricians, famous for their piety, had their dwellings, before entering Italy, near the Meotic Lake, and later on the territory of Dacia, close to the mouths of the Danube, where their ethnic traces still appear during historical times under the name of **Arrechi** [7].

[7. According to **Strabo** (V. 3. 12), the temple of **Diana of Aricia** had its origin connected to **Diana Taurica**, and "**barbarian**" and "**Scythian**" religious institutions truly existed there.
Strabo mentions (XI. 2. 11) the ***'Arrechoi*** among the populations settled near the Meotic lake, and **Pliny** (VI. 7. 1) the **Arrechi**.
The northern arm or mouth of the Danube appears with **Apollonius Rhodius** under the name of ***'Arechos***, and in some codices of **Ptolemy**, under the name of ***'Inariachion*** (Ed.Didot. I. p. 460). Similarly, **Virgil** calls the territory of the **Arimi**, **Inarime** (Aen. IX. 716), "**in**" being in both cases just a simple preposition of the Pelasgo-Getic dialect from the Lower Danube].

The nymph Egeria, who, according to what traditions tell, was the wife and inspiration of Numa in his entire work of religious organization, was from Aricia. The legends attribute especially to her the idea of inviting the great Pelasgian God to Rome, and the mystery with his protective shield. We witness here just a religious reminiscence from the ancient country of the Pelasgian tribes from the Lower Danube.

According to **Herodotus, Zalmoxis**, the great God of the Getae, was called by some **Gebeleizis** (**Herodotus**, lib. XCIV). This form of this name is without any doubt altered. Herodotus did not know well the northern dialect of the Pelasgians, as can be deduced from different Scythian words which he transmitted to us erroneously.

The oldest images of the supreme divinity showed usually only his head.
In some lands of Greece, great ***Zeus*** was also worshipped under the name of ***chephale***, head (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, p.596; **Preller**, Gr. Myth. I. 99). The Boetians gave him also the epithet ***charaios***, from ***chara***, head (**Preller**, Gr. Myth. I. p.77). In Italy, Jupiter Latiaris was also called **Latiale caput** (**Lucanis**, Phars. I. 535-536). And in Rome, at the time of the great funeral repasts, the images of the gods, called **capita deorum** (TN – head = cap), which represented only the heads or busts of the gods, were placed on lecterns (**Preller-Jordan**, R. M. I. 149).
The Trojans also showed the image of Jupiter fulgurator or Jupiter avus, only by the figure of his head, as attests the terracotta specimen found by **Schliemann** in his dig at Troy (Ilios p.806).

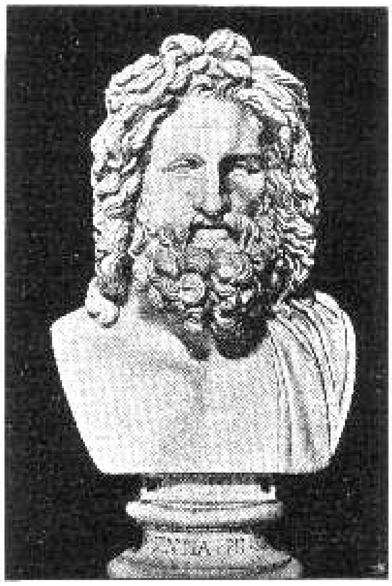
Gebeleizis is only a secondary name of **Zalmoxis**, and definitely a composed word.
The last part corresponds to ***Zes*** = ***Zeus*** and very probably Gebeleizis expresses only the same idea as ***chephale-Zis*** = ***chiphale-Dis*** or ***chephale-Dios***, meaning the "**Head of God**", as it was shown by the enormous simulacrum from the south-eastern arch of the Carpathians.

The titanic figure of Zeus ***aristos megistos euruopa, aigiochos***, from the **Omul** mountain, was not an abstract personification of the divinity.
This simulacrum represented in fact the face of a famous prehistoric personality, **Saturn**, the God and idealized ruler of the peoples of Pelasgian race.
After **Caelus** or **Uranos**, Saturn was the great divinity worshipped on the territory of Dacia, until the time when the Roman armies introduced here the official religion of the empire.
The age of this monument harks back to the great times of the ethnic and political development of the Pelasgians, when fate had not yet started to turn sour for the Eastern Pelasgians, and when a sizable part of the Latin tribes had not yet migrated to Italy. By its colossal size, this simulacrum expresses also how happy and how glorious were those times, and how vast was the secular power of that person, whose figure was eternized on that rock on the Omul mountain.

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XII. 8. The figure of *Zeus Dachie* (*aristos, megistos, euruopa*) and of Jupiter of Otricoli.

There is a surprising similarity between the simulacrum of ***Zeus Dachie*** (figured above) and the bust of Jove at the Vatican, discovered at Otricoli (figured here).



Jupiter of Otricoli.

Bust of marble found at Otricoli, conserved today in Sala rotunda in the Vatican.

*From **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs, II. p.383.*

Even from the times of the republic, the Romans started to imitate the archaic Pelasgian forms in the iconic representation of their divinities.

The most beautiful statues of **Saturn, Hercules, Apollo and Diana** (Iana), which adorned the big temples of Italy and of the conquered provinces, present in everything the characters of the archaic Pelasgian style.

Generally, the Romans had the principle to consider and worship as sacred only the figures consecrated by ancient national traditions and legends. The figures of the Lari and the Penati, and the rough simulacrum of the Great Mother from Pessinus prove this.

But which was the primitive type of the **Roman Jove**, called in Latin theology **Jupiter Optimus Maximus**, and which was the origin of his images, no author can say. (**Pliny** - H. N. lib. XXXV. 157- tells us only that the image of **Jove from the Capitol**, consecrated by Tarquinius the Old, had been made of **clay**, by one so-called **Vulca** or **Vulga** of Veii).

The oldest Roman simulacrum of Jove was called **Jupiter Lapis** (Cf. **Cicero**, Fam. VII. 12) [1].

[1. The person making an oath **hold a stone in his hand**, and after pronouncing the sacramental formula, threw it away (**Festus** s. Lapidem). The same rite is still noticed today in some parts of Romania. “When the peasants take some vow or make a pledge, take in hand a stone or a stick, etc” (**A.Marinescu**, Galasesci village, Arges district)].

On this Jove-of-stone were made the most fearful oaths and were consecrated the international peace or alliance treaties. But, what shape and what size this simulacrum of old-Latin times had, we cannot know for sure.

A fact is fully established though, that the **Greek Jove** (***Zeus 'Ellanios*** s. ***Panellenios***) was distinguished from the **Pelasgian Jove** by entirely different characters.

Speaking about the great God of the Trojan times, Homer says: "The son of **Saturn** (Jove) said, and signaled his approval with **his black eyebrows**, and **his silver locks**, **which fell down from the immortal head**, moved, and great Olympos shook (Iliad, I. v. 528-530).

This was the figure of the supreme divinity worshipped by the Pelasgians.

The Greeks, on the contrary, showed Jove of Olympia, until the times of Phidias, with a more oriental type, with shorn hair and curls on the forehead, with the beard cut on the jaws and pointed outwards (**Duruy**, Hist.d.Grecs, I, p.358, 794; **Pausanias**, lib. V. 22. 1; Ibid, 24. 6).

The Romans though followed the archaic Latin traditions. They adopted for their supreme divinity a Pelasgian barbarian figure, representing Jove with abundant, hirsute hair, with locks falling on the shoulders, with bushy beard, with a plain dress and a half bare chest. (**Jupiter tonitrualis** on the column of Trajan presents the same type – **Frohner**, I. pl. 49 – and also a bronze statuette discovered in Hungary and conserved at the British Museum - **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs, II. 637).

By examining very attentively the general character of the forms, and the various details presented by these two monuments, it seems that the barbarian rustic figure of Jove of Otricoli was following the colossal type of ***Zeus aristos megistos euruopa*** from the Dacian Carpathians, or the country of the holy and blessed Hyperboreans. The Roman traditions had been tightly connected to the Pelasgian God from near the Istru even from the times of Numa [2].

[2. Even during prehistoric antiquity, the most sacred images and objects were considered to have been those from the regions of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea.

Orestes and **Pylades** steal from Crimea the sacred figure of **Diana Taurica**, fallen from the sky, and take it to Athens (**Euripides**. Iph. T. 79) or to Sparta, according to **Pausanias** (III. 16. 7). And according to other tradition, Orestes took the holy image of Diana Taurica firstly to **Aricia** in Italy (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, V. Band p. 972). **Hercules**, sent by Eurystheus, the king of Mycenae, comes to the **Hyperboreans** to steal the **holy golden apples** (**Apoll**. Bibl. II. 5. 11. 13). Still **Hercules**, comes to the country of **Istria** to ask from Diana **the deer with the golden horns**, consecrated to her by the nymph Taygeta, the daughter of Atlas (**Pindar**, Olymp. III. 27). **The Argonauts** get together in order to steal the **holy golden fleece** consecrated to Mars.

In the year of Rome 682, the **consul M. Licinius Lucullus** took from an island of the Black Sea one of the most archaic figures of **Apollo**, a colossal statue of 13.86m, which was consequently placed on the Capitol and called **Apollo Capitolinus**].

Jupiter Optimus Maximus was the national god of Dacia. This is understood even from the epigraphic monuments of the Roman administration.

Even in the time of Hadrian, soon after the conquest of Dacia, a significant part of the population of the province was transferred far away, in Britain, near **vallum Hadriani**, where it formed an auxiliary troupe with the name **Cohors I Aelia Dacorum**, which was mentioned there until the 5th century. From the 23 votive inscriptions of these Dacian soldiers, 21 are addressed to **Jupiter Optimus Maximus**, one to **Mars** and two others to **Mars** associated with **Cocidius** (cascus deus=vetus deus). Jupiter Optimus Maximus was therefore a parental divinity very popular with the Dacians.

As type and ideal of divine majesty, the consecrated figure of ***Zeus euruopa***, as represented by the rock on the peak Omul, is characterized by abundant hair, falling on the shoulders in long locks, while above the forehead the hair resembled the mane of a lion.

The same particular arrangement of the hair is also presented by the bust of Otricoli.

There exists another very characteristic analogy between these two simulacra.

The bust of Jove of Otricoli presents in all the features of its physiognomy, not the Italo-Latin type, but a northern barbarian figure, a noble but severe ethnic type from the parts of the Lower Danube, as we also see expressed on the ancient coins of Dacia (see the figure of the Dacian king on the coin shown in Chapter VI. 4).

In cult, **Jupiter Optimus Maximus** of the Latins was the same divinity as ***Zeus aristos megistos euruopa,*** the great God of the Pelasgian race (**Cicero**, De nat. deor. Lib. II. 25), to whom **Homer** addresses his hymn (Hymn. in Jovem) and Achilles his prayers on the battlefield of Troy (Ibid, Iliad, XVI. v. 233).

Even the epithet **Latiaris**, with its forms **Latius, Latioris**, of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, appears to correspond more to ***euruopa***. And if this epithet of Latiaris, Latius or Latioris had everywhere an ethnographic character, it did not designate the Jupiter of the Latins, from the narrow limits of the lower Tiber, but Jupiter of the Proto-Latins, settled in the eastern regions of Europe before their partial migration to Italy.

So, from an archaeological point of view, Jove of Otricoli is just a simple imitation of the archaic figure of ***Zeus euruopa***, or in other words **Jupiter of Otricoli is the topical god of Dacia** [3].

> [3. The French archaeologist **E. David**, who has studied and described the bust of Jove from the Vatican, has noted a remarkable artistic irregularity at this figure. A profound horizontal line, says he, separates in two the forehead, which produces a suggestive eminence of the upper part of the cranium. The learned archaeologist thinks that the artist wanted to represent in the upper part of the forehead the **gestation** of Minerva (**Larousse**, Gr. Dict. Univ.- Jupiter). The bust of Jove of Otricoli appears therefore to have been modeled from a type of simulacrum which presented on the forehead of the God the traces of the conception of Minerva].

A similar case is presented by the statue of the titan **Atlas**, from the Naples museum, which was modeled after the colossal column which rises on **Bucegi** Mountain, close to the imposing simulacrum of ***Zeus euruopa***. About this column, so famous in the prehistoric world, we shall speak in the following chapters.

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XII. 9. Rhea, *‘Rea, ‘Ree, ‘Reia*.

While in ante-Homeric religion **Saturn** was considered the personification of the supreme being of the sky, **Rhea**, his wife, represented in a newer form the divinity of the earth which gave birth to everything, **Gaea**, **Tellus** or **Terra**.

Her honorific titles on the territory of ancient Hellada were: ***Megale Mater ton theon*** (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. I. 31. 4), ***Mater ton theon*** (Ibid. lib. V. 49. 2), ***megale theos*** (**Pausanias**, lib. I. 31. 4), ***Ma*** (**Stephanus Byz**.), and ***thea pammator ‘Reie*** (C. I. G. 6012c).

The Romans called Rhea in their public cult **Magna deum Mater** (**Lucretius**, R.N. II. v. 591); **Deum Mater** (**Ovid**, Metam. X. 103-104, 686; **Livy**, lib. XXIX. c. 10); **Terra Mater** (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. c. 12); **Ops** (or **Opis**); and **Maja** (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 10; **Ovid**, Fast. VI. V. 285; C I. L. VIII, nr. 2670), the last name having the meaning of **grandmother** or **old woman** (TN – **mosa**).

The name Rhea, in old Pelasgian language, was just a simple appellative, with the meaning of “**regina**”, queen (**Ops Regina**, C. I. L. VIII. nr. 2670). In its masculine form, the word “**Raiu**” with the meaning of “emperor” has been still preserved in some heroic Romanian songs. The same word under the form of **Ra** (king) is found in the hieratical terminology of the Egyptians, inherited from the ancient Pelasgians, who had settled during the Neolithic epoch on the plains of the Nile.

In Greek legends the name Rhea is sometimes replaced, or better said interpreted, with the term **Basilea** (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. III. c.57), while in the official Roman cult with the appellative “**regina**” (C.I. L. VIII. nr. 2670; **Macrobius**, Sat. I. 12) [1].

[1. From the Greek name of **Basilea** and the Pelasgian name of **Rea**, the tradition noted by Diodorus Siculus had made up two sisters, out of whom the first, being older, had received the name of the Great Mother].

Rhea, also called **Opis** by the Romans, and **Apia** by the Pelasgian Scythians (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. 59), was generally considered as the goddess of agriculture (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. c.10), of viticulture, and as having founded the cities and the citadels. In this quality, Rhea had the name of **Mater turrita** (**Virgil**, Aen. VI. v.785; **Ovid**, Fast. IV. v.219; **Varro** - at Augustin, Civ. D. VI. 24; **Lucretius**, R. N. II. v. 607).

Rhea was especially worshipped though as the “**Mother of the mountains**”, as reigning over the forests, valleys and springs, as the protective divinity of the shepherds, of the flocks, ***Mater oreia***, **Mater montium** (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. III. 58), and as **Mater ferarum**, the mistress of the wild animals (**Lucretius**, R. N. lib. II. v. 590 seqq). In this quality, to the Great Mother or Rhea were consecrated especially the heights of the mountains, the springs, the rivers (**Pausanias**, lib. VIII. 44. 3) and the caves (Ibid. lib. X. 32. 4; **Preller**, Gr. Myth. I. p.404). Her primitive simulacra existed on the peaks of the mountains even from immemorial times.

The legendary figure of Niobe from Sipyl Mountain, the figure turned to stone of Ariadna from the island of Naxos, the sad image with the covered head, from the mountain of Lebanon, represented in reality only the ancient simulacra of the divinity of the **Great Mother** (**Preller**, Gr. Myth. I. 409, 423, II. 269).

The cult of the Great Mother or Rhea was especially honored in prehistoric antiquity on the Mount **Ida** near Troy, where she was called **Mater Idaea** (**Cicero**, De legibus lib. II. c. 9; **Livy**, lib. XXIX c.10; **Lucretius**, lib. II. v. 612), or ***Mater idaia*** (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. X. 3. 12; **Dionysius Halik**. Lib. II. 19). The Phrygians and the Trojans who dwelt near Mount Ida worshipped, as **Strabo** tells us (Geogr. lib. X. 3. 12), especially Rhea, for whom they made orgies, and whom they called the Great Mother and **Idaea**, **Dindymene**, **Pessinuntica** and **Cybele** after the different locations of her sanctuaries.

As divinity of mountains and agriculture, Rhea or the Great Mother was one of the most worshipped and popular figures in the religion of the Pelasgian tribes migrated to Italy. She was especially considered as the "**Mother**" who "**gave birth to the Latin people**".

The Sibylline books, whose origin was reduced to the most ancient times of the Roman state, contained an archaic tradition regarding the holy simulacrum of Rhea or the Great mother, which had been in the hands of the Phrygians from the most obscure antiquity, exactly as the image of Diana from the Tauric peninsula was in the possession of the Pelasgians of Cappadocia, according to their tales.

"The Mother", writes **Ovid** (Fast. IV. v. 259), loved the mountain **Dindymos**, the mountain **Cybele**, the fine mountain **Ida** with its springs, and the wealthy citadel of **Troy**. When Eneas moved Troy on the plain of Italy, the goddess herself almost followed the ships which transported there the sacred things. Later though, when Rome became powerful and lifted its head over the subjugated world, the priests, upon consulting the oracles of the Sibylline books, read, as it is told, this verse:

"The Mother is not here, I invite you, Roman, to look for Mother, and to receive her with clean hands when she will arrive".

But the fathers of Rome did not know how to interpret this mysterious oracle. What sort of mother they missed and where to look for her, they did not know. The tradition had been lost. With this purpose in mind, the senate decided to consult the oracle of Apollo of Delphi and from there they received the answer to bring the Mother, who was on Mount Ida. The Romans sent a delegation to Asia Minor, to bring the famous simulacrum of the Great Mother from Mount Ida, and when king Atalus gave them the ancient figure of the goddess, he told her the following: "Go! You will always be ours. Phrygia is the cradle of the Roman heroes".

In the northern parts of Istru and the Black Sea, the cult of the telluric divinity, or the Great Mother, had been preponderant even from the most remote ante-historical times [2].

[2. As **Apia** for the **Scythians**, as **Hertha** for the **Svevi**, and as **Mater deum** for the **Aestyi** from near the Baltic Sea (**Tacitus**, Germ. C. 40. 45). Also, important archaeological traces about the cult of this divinity in a very remote epoch, were found in the north-eastern parts of Gaul. In the sepulchral caverns from near the river **Marne** (**Matrona** during the Roman epoch) in France, were discovered various Neolithic bas-reliefs representing a feminine divinity (**Cartailhac**, France prehist. P.242), sculpted in the same type as the following figure. They show without doubt the simulacrum of the **Great Mother**, as indicated also by the name of the river].

On the territory of Dacia especially, Rhea or Cybele, assimilated to **Gaea**, was a first class divinity. The sanctuaries and temples of this goddess had, during Greco-Roman antiquity, the name of ***Matroon***, Lat. **Matroum** (**Pliny**, H. N. lib. XVI. 50. 2), meaning sacred place, dedicated to the religious cult of the great divinity called the Mother of gods.

The term of ***Matron*** or **Matroum**, considered as archaic even during the times of **Pausanias** (lib. V. 20. 9), appears on the former territory of Dacia under the very old folk form of **Motru**, and the origin of this term in our countries predates incontestably the Roman domination.

Motru is even today the name of a significant river in the western parts of Romania.

Motru is the name of a **monastery** situated near this river, in Gorj district.

Another monastery, built as a fortress on the hill located at the confluence of the rivers Motru and Jiu, which enjoyed a certain celebrity during Romanian history, is called even today **Motru** or **Gura-Motrului** (TN – the mouth of Motru - **Frundzescu**, Dictionar top. al Romaniei).

Another mountain from the upper region of this river, and two other hills from its lower part, have also the name of **Motru**.

These are precious historical reminders of the fact that once, in this fine and fertile valley of Motru, there existed various **Matroum**, a flourishing religious cult of the benevolent Pelasgian divinity, the **Mother of gods**, the personification of the earth.

At the place where today the tower of Severin rises on some ancient ruins, a **portico** for travelers and merchants, dedicated to the Great Mother (C. I. L. III. nr. 1582), had been built during Roman domination, proof that near this colonnade there existed in Roman times a commercial market and a renowned temple consecrated to the great divinity of the shepherds and agriculture.

We also find the same remains of temples and ancient sanctuaries, dedicated to the Mother of gods, in the wonderful region of Olt, in both its fir forests and its limitless meadows. These sanctuaries were called here by the pastoral and rustic population, either **Motru**, or **Mamu** (**Frundzescu**, Dictionar top. al Romaniei).

But among all these sacred places, the most important temple of the **Mother of gods** seems to have been that from **Gura-Motrului** [3].

[3. We also find important traces about the antique cult of Rhea, on the territory of **Filiasi** village, in the neighborhood of the monastery **Gura-Motrului**. **Motru** is here the name of a hill, and two other places are called Silistea from **Manesci** and Silistea from **Manoica** (M. Dict. Geogr.).
Mane was the honorific title of **Saturn**, and **Manesa** appears as a folk name given to the **Great Mother** divinity. Various heights of the Carpathians bear this name].

The old history of this monastery has been lost, but the remains of the palaces here and the building of this monastery after the archaic custom, as a fortress on a hilltop, tell us that the sanctuary from Gura-Motrului had once a great renown and an expansive cult, exactly like the magnificent temple of Apollo at the mouths of the Danube [4].

[4. **The Great geographical dictionary of Romania**, Vol. III. p.668 tells us: **Gura-Motrului**, fine monastery in Mehedinti district… situated at the foot of the hill from the confluence of the river Motru with the river Jiu, in a picturesque position. There are **ruins of some old and fine palaces** around this monastery….In this monastery, which **is surrounded by a wall, like a fortress**, and with iron gates…;

The Column of Trajan (**Froener**, pl.130) shows on the territory of Dacia, in the parts of today Oltenia, a **circular temple** of the Great mother, where can also be observed two priests of the goddess, **sacerdos tunicis muliebribus**].

On the territory of ancient Hellada, the cult of the divinity of Earth had always the character of a foreign religion, imported from the barbarian lands (**Plato**, Cratylus, I. p.293; Timaeus, II. 211).

Suidas has preserved a precious historical note about the beginning of the cult of the Great Mother in **Attica** and especially in **Athens**.

“A man”, writes he, “called ***Metragurtes***, traveling through Attica, initiated there the women in the cult of the Mother of gods, as these inhabitants tell. The Athenians threw him in a gully and killed him. But soon after this an epidemic followed, and the oracle rebuked them and told them to propitiate the soul of the deceased. So they erected on the site where they had killed Metragurtes a curia (house of assembly), and after fencing it, they consecrated it to the Mother of gods, erected a statue to Metragurtes, and filled in with earth the said gully. This **Matrou** was later used for the depositing and conservation of the laws”.

This was, according to Greek traditions, the origin of the **Matrou** and the cult of the Mother of gods with the Athenians.

The name **Metragurtes** is not a personal name, but an ethnic name, from the locality of origin of this priest of the Great Mother [5].

[5. One of the **Dactyli**, ancient priests of the Great Mother, had the name **Scythes** (**Pauly**, Real-Encyclopadie, p.55). **Cecrops**, the first king of Attica, about whom **Macrobius** tells us (Sat. I. 10) that he consecrated there an altar to Saturn and Rhea, was, as we shall later see, one of the heroes of the Pelasgian race from Istru].

This form of **Metragurtes** supposes a locality with the name of ***Metra-gora***, as the ancient Greeks formed the ethnic names of Gabalites from Gabala and Abderites from Abdera (**Stephanos Byz**.). But a locality with the name of ***Metra-gora*** never existed, either on the territory of Greece, or of Asia Minor. It belongs to a barbarian region and specifically Pelasgian, as attested by the first part of the word.

Exactly as the cult of Apollo extended towards Delphi, Delos and Troy, through the shepherds from north of the Istru, through the prophets and preachers of this solar cult, in the same way the religion of the Great Mother was also imported in Greece through the ambulant priests from the

barbarian lands, especially those of the pious Hyperboreans, who sent their gifts in wheat sheaves towards the southern parts.
Various traces from the religion of the Mother of gods, still preserved in the folk traditions (legends, carols, incantations), as well as numerous traces of the cult and the simulacra of this divinity through the Carpathians of Dacia, tell us that the religion of the great Mother, of Gaea, Rhea, or the personified Earth, was once the principal religion of this country.

On antique monuments, the divinity of Earth, or the Mother of gods, is usually represented sitting, either on a throne, as a matron or queen (regina, Rhea), or sometimes sitting on a chariot pulled by lions. She wears on her head a ***polos*** or **modius**, from which a veil falls down, the ends of which cover both shoulders. Generally the goddess appears in the same characteristic costume which the Romanian women from the district of Romanati wear even today.
Her clothes were adorned with precious stones and various metals (**Albericus**, De deorum imagine, c. 12), and this evokes the costume and affluence of the wealthy Agathyrses, also called ***chrisophoroi***.
The famous statue which Phidias, the most illustrious sculptor of Greece, had made for the Matrou of Athens, represented the Mother of gods sitting on the throne, holding in one hand a tympanon (TN - bucium), while in the lower part of the throne were figured some lions (**Pausanias**, lib. I. 3.5; **Arrianus**, Periplus, IX. 1), as emblem of power, and especially an attribute of one who reigned over all the animals of the earth.



Rhea (Cybele), the Mother of gods.
*(From **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs. II. 653)*

Marble statuette discovered at **Pireus** in 1855, in the ruins of the temple of the Mother of gods, today preserved at the Louvre Museum.

The goddess is shown sitting on **a high backed throne**, wearing on her head a **polos** or **modius**, one end of which, brought over the shoulder, falls right down to the ground.

To Rhea or the Great Mother was also consecrated the **fir tree** (pinus), a tree which we see even today figured, as a living ornament, near the entries and altars of the churches of Romania, primitive sacred symbol of a disappeared pastoral-mountainous religion [6].

[6. The **gold chair** (throne), **chariot** (TN – car) and **tympanon** (TN – bucium) of Rhea are mentioned even today in Romanian folk incantations:

…the Mother of God, from the gate of the sky…
On silver ladder descended, on **golden chair** sat, proudly declared:
Do not wail, as I will give you, in your right hand, **golden** "**bucium**",
In four corners of the world it shall echo, all the goddesses shall get together…
*(**Marianu**, Incantations, p.10, 100-102)*

And the Mother of God…."**bucium**" **of real gold**
In my right hand has placed,
Bugle of gold, in my left hand has placed…
*(**Marianu**, Spells, p.126-137)*

The Mother of God met them
From her **gold chariot** she told them….
*(**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.391)*]

The primitive simulacra of the Great Mother, which once existed, and partly still do in the Carpathians of our countries, generally bear the name of **Babe**, s. **Baba** (TN – Old women).

The origin of this name is very old. The primitive meaning of the word "**baba**" in Romanian language is "**grandmother**" (**Hasdeu**, Marele Dictionar).

This word also existed in Latin rustic language, exactly like **tata** (TN – father) and **papa** (mos).

Plautus (Stichus, V. 7.3) gives all these expressions under the form of **Babae**, **Tatae**, **Papae**.

The same word appears also in the antique geographical nomenclature.

In Phrygia or in Pisidia, a locality was named **Baba**, from the ethnic word ***Babanos***, which has been preserved in inscriptions; one **Baba-nomon** was in Pontus, westwards from Amasia; **Baba** or **Babae** was the name of a city in Mauritania Tingitana, which during the time of Augustus had received the rights of Roman colony; and finally **Babyle** (***Babyle***) was a locality on the territory of the Odrysii in Thrace (**Pauly-Wissowa**, Real-Encyclopadie).

In the Italian language this word appears in the masculine form of "**babbo**", "**babu**", with the meaning of **tata** (In Romania, Valcea district, Babeni village, **babu** is a title of respect which the nephews and nieces give to the **uncle**). In modern Greek language ***baba***, as well as **baba** of the Slavs of the Balkan peninsula, means "grandmother" (**Cihac**, Dict. D'etym. Daco-roum; **Krauss**, Sitte und Brauch d. Sud-Slaven, p.5).

This name, otherwise synonymous with ***megale mater***, had a national religious character.

Rhea, the supreme feminine divinity, was considered as the Great Mother of the gods and of the human genus, exactly as Saturn, worshipped as the father of gods, and the genealogical originator of the Pelasgian tribes, was called "**Mos**" (**avus**, **senex**, ***presbytes***) [7].

[7. As the most majestic heights of the Carpathians were once consecrated to the supreme divinity of **the sky**, Saturn, under the name of **Tatal, Tatra, Tartar(os), Manea, Mosul** and **Popau** (Papaeus), similarly a very considerable number of crests, caves and natural pyramids of the Carpathians were dedicated once to the cult of the **Great Mother**, as **Terra Mater** and **Dea montium**, under the name of **Tatoia, Matra, Mama, Tartaroia, Manesa** and **Papusa** (the feminine form of **Papaeus**, in Macedonian Romanian **pap** and **pap aus**). Compare the personal names **Olympos** and **Olympusa** (**Apollod**. II. 7. 8), **Thoon** and **Thoosa** (**Homer**, Iliad. V. 152; Odyss. I. 71).

The Great Mother as divinity of the earth was worshipped in our countries also under the archaic name of **Popina**. In Braila and Buzeu districts, some of the funerary mounds, situated on valleys and plains, bear the generic name of **popina**. In the modern Greek dialect of Thasos island, ***popina*** means "**grandmother**" or "**baba**", old woman. This word, initially applied to the statues of the divinity of the Earth, or the Great Mother, which were erected as religious ensigns on the graves of the persons of distinction (**Homer**, Epigr. III), were later applied to the funerary mounds.

The origin of the name is archaic. We still find in the ancient cult of the Latin and Etruscan tribes, traces of worship of a divinity of an old woman called **Juna Populonia**, by its primitive character identical with the Great Mother (**Macrobius**, Sat. III. 11; **Preller-Jordan**, R. M. I. 279). **Virgil** (Aen. X. 172) presents her under the name of **Populonia mater**, and on an inscription from Dacia she is mentioned as a national sovereign goddess having the name **Juno Regina Populonia Dea patria**].

In the Greek legends which **Diodorus Siculus** communicates to us, Rhea was also named ***presbitata*** (lib. III. c. 57; Isis, the daughter of Rhea also had the epithet of **ancient** - Ibid. I. 11.4).

The name "**babe**" (TN – old women) had also been attributed in antiquity to other national Pelasgian divinities, as a title of respect. **Homer** gives Juno the epithet ***presba*** too, but with the meaning of "venerated" (Iliad, V. v.721; VII. v.383).

Saint Augustin (De Civ. Dei. III. 2) mentions "**baba Vinerea**" (TN – old woman Friday) of the pagans (aviam Venerem). And on an inscription from Croatia we read a dedication addressed **DIBVS MAIORIVUS**, where the epithet "**majores**" is only an official interpretation of the folk name of "**babe**" or "**mose**".

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XII. 10. Rhea or the Great Mother venerated under the name of Dacia, Terra Dacia and Dacia Augusta.

Rhea or the Great Mother officially appears, on the historical monuments of the Roman epoch, as an ancient **ethnic divinity of Dacia**.

In the beginning she had been worshipped there, and also in other Pelasgian lands, under the name of **Rhea**.

In the mountainous parts of ancient Dacia, some villages called **Rea** and **Reieni** exist even today, names which attest that the heights from the vicinity of these villages had once been consecrated to Rhea, the supreme telluric divinity of the Pelasgian world [1].

[1. **Rea**, village in the valley of Hateg, on the territory of ancient Roman Sarmizegetusa.
There are **three** known **villages** called **Reieni**, all situated in mountainous regions: **one** in Mehedinti district, near Ponoare, **another** in Banat, SE of Caransebes, and **the third** in Biharia, near Crisul-negru, west of Tartaroia mountain].

But in later times Rhea appears venerated at north of the Lower Danube under the name of ***Dachia***, **Dacia** and **Terra Dacia**, as a national divinity, as **the personification of the earth of this country.**

Following primitive Pelasgian ideas, Rhea or the Great Mother, considered as a national divinity, benevolent and protective, had various geographical epithets with the various Pelasgian tribes, after the cities, the lands and the mountains where her most renowned sanctuaries and simulacra were located.
She was worshipped in Phrygia under the name of ***thea Phrygia*** or **Phrygia Mater** (**Arnobius**, lib. II. 73; C. I. L. II. nr. 179; **Strabo**, lib. X. e. 12), and on the territory of Troy she was venerated as **Mater Iliaca** (**Prudent**, c. Symm. I. 629, at **Goehler**, De Matris magnae cultu. p.31).
She also had the epithet of ***Plachiana mater***, after the Pelasgian city **Placia** near the Hellespont, in Mysia (**Pausanias**, lib. V. 13. 4) and ***Pessinountia***, after the big city Pessinus of Phrygia (**Strabo**, lib. X. 3. 13).

Under the name of **Dacia**, Rhea or the Great Mother appears worshipped at north of the Lower Istru during the times of Roman domination.
On one of the Roman inscriptions discovered at Deva, she is mentioned as a divinity with the name of **TERRA DACIA**, and her place of honor is immediately after **Jupiter Optimus Maximus** and before **Genius Populi Romani** (C.I.L.III nr. 1351).
We also know about another important inscription from the time of M. Antoninus Pius, relevant to the cult of the Great Mother under the name of “Dacia”:

On the day of 4 April, the tribune of the legion XIII Gemina, inaugurated at Apulum (Alba – Julia) an altar or sanctuary dedicated to the national religion of Dacia.
Leading the divinities was **Jupiter Optimus Maximus**, then the commonly mentioned **Dii et deae immortales**, and finally **DACIA** (C. I. L. III. nr. 1063). This entire inscription refers to the particular cult of the divinities worshipped in Dacia. Jupiter Optimus Maximus of this inscription is ***Zeus aristos megistos*** of Dacia. And the epithet of “immortales” is a characteristic title of the Homeric divinities, or eastern Pelasgian.
That this divinity called “**Dacia**” and “**Terra Dacia**”, represented Rhea or Magna Mater in the public cult, can be ascertained also by the fact that the sanctuary at Alba, dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and to the goddess Dacia, was consecrated on the 4th of April, which, according to the Julian Faste (C. I. L. I. p.390) corresponds to the first day of the great feast days of the Mother of gods, with prayers, processions and games which lasted for seven days.

In regard to the iconic representation of the Great Mother called “**Dacia**” or “**Terra Dacia**”, she appears figured on a coin of the emperor Trajan (112ad), wearing the national Dacian cap on her head. Her seat is a rock. She holds in her right hand **ears of wheat** and in her left hand an **imperial scepter** decorated on top with the figure of a vulture (aquila) (Cf. **Juvenal**, Sat. X. 43; **Suetonius**, Galba, 1; This was not a military ensign, as mistakenly supposed by **Eckhel** – VI. 428 – the ensigns of the legions had another form and arrangement. The specimens from Trajan’s Column prove this). Near her there are two children, one of whom offers her ears of wheat, while the other offers a grape, attributes of the Great Mother as goddess of agriculture and viticulture, indicating at the same time the fertility of the soil of Dacia (**Eckhel**, Doctrina numorum. Vol. VI. p.428; **Boliac**, Buciumul, An I, p.112-113).

This coin is very important, as we see the divinity **DACIA** represented even during the time of Trajan in official form, with political honors and telluric attributes, enthroned on the Carpathians with the imperial scepter in hand as **Terra Mater** (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 12; **Preller-Jordan**, R. M. I. 399), as a protective divinity of this country, and as “**Mother**” of its inhabitants, who, under the form of the two children (Dacia superior et inferior) bring her the first produce of their crops.

It is very probable that during the last fierce war between the Romans and the Dacians, at the assault of Sarmizegetusa, the divinity **DACIA** had been **invoked** by the Romans.
Various consecrations of Roman public monuments in honor of this divinity, her figuring on the coins of the empire in an imposing attitude and with sovereign telluric attributes, appear as an official confirmation of a solemn occasion when this divinity had been **invoked**.

In the wars which they fought with enemy peoples, the Romans, following an ancient religious custom before the principal assault on their capitals and fortresses, invoked during a certain religious ceremony the protective divinities of the enemy fortress and people, with the following consecrated formula: “If there is a god, or a goddess, under whose guardianship the citadel and the people (the name of the respective locality is said) is, but especially you, who have received under your protection this city and this people, I pray to you, I worship you, and I ask forgiveness from you, so that you shall abandon this people and this city (again the topical name), you shall leave their places, their temples, their religious ceremonies and their city, and you shall leave them, you shall inspire fear in their souls, terror and oblivion, and after you’ve deserted them and left them without help, you shall come to Rome, to me and mine; I pray that our places, temples, and religious ceremonies will please you more, and that our city will be more grateful to you, so that we might know and understand that you are now **my leaders, the leaders of the Roman people, and of my soldiers** (**Macrobius**, Sat. III. 9), and if you shall do so, I swear that I shall raise temples for you and I shall decree games in your honor”.

After this prayer the victims were immolated, then the dictator or emperor recited a new formula, with which he cursed all the enemy cities and armies, ending with the following words "So I ask you **Tellus Mater**", touching the ground with his hand, "and you **Jupiter**", lifting his hands skywards.

As **Macrobius** tells us (Sat. III. 9), in the old Annals of Rome were mentioned a number of enemy cities and armies of the Gauls, Spaniards, Africans, Maurs and other nations, against whom these formulae of invoking and cursing had been used.

On this coin the legend **DACIA AVGVST** is around the central figure, and underneath is the legend **PROVINCIA S.C**. On other coins it is **DACIA AVGVSTA** or **AVGVSTI** (**Koeleseri**, Auraria Romano-Dacica, p.13; **Griselini**, Geschichte d. Temesw. Banats, II. Tab. VI).

On the reverse of another coin, minted in Dacia during the time of the emperor Filip the Arab, the divinity **DACIA**, protector of the province, is represented with her head covered with the national Dacian cap. The goddess holds in her right hand the curved Dacian sword, as symbol of her warring power. (The Great Mother was considered as a warring divinity also by the Pelasgians of Cappadocia – **Strabo**, XII. 2. 3 – and by the Trojans – **Virgil**, Aen. X. 252). On the same side of the figure can be seen a military standard thrust into the ground, with the number V of the Macedonian legion, and at ground level a vulture with a ring (crown?) in its beak, looking towards the face of the goddess, symbolizing probably a characteristic attribute of her as supreme mountainous divinity, and as Mater ferarum. In her left hand she holds another military standard with the number XIII of the Gemina legion, and on the lower part of the coin there is a walking lion, the classical and indispensable attribute of the Mother of gods. Underneath is the year II of the Dacian era, which corresponds to the year 1001 of Rome, or 248 of the Christian era.



The divinity "**Dacia**".
(After ***Boliac****, Buciumul, 1863, p.184)*

This coin is even more significant, because it shows the national divinity of Dacia as guardian of the two Roman legions, as mentioned in the solemn invoking formula.

The cult of the Great Mother under the name of "Dacia" at north of the Lower Istru was not a creation of the Roman administration. It was much older.

We do not find in Roman epigraphy and in any other religious cult of the Roman provinces, for example, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Mesia, Thrace, Greece, or even Italy, any other example of personification of the respective Province as a divinity.

Finally, we must still add that on the back side of a coin, probably from the time of Domitian, the divinity was represented as a sad woman, sitting near a trophy, and having the inscription of **DAKIA** (**Eckhel**, Doctrina numorum veterum, II. p.4).

As Saturn was called **Dokius Caeli filius** in ancient legends, similarly his sister and wife Rhea appears worshipped in the public cult of the Province under the name of ***Dachia*, Dacia, Terra Dacia** and **Dacia Augusta**.

She was one of the most important topical divinities of Eastern Europe.

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XII. 11. Rhea or the Great Mother with the name Dochia and Dochiana in Romanian legends.

Rhea or the Great Mother, worshipped by the Pelasgian tribes from the north of the lower Danube under the name of ***Dachia*** and "**Dacia**", appears in Romanian legends and folk songs as "**Dochia**" and "**Dochiana**".

In **Romanian legends** she is seen especially as an old woman, called "**Baba Dochia**", who climbed too early to the mountain with her sheep, at the beginning of spring, was turned to ice and then to stone, on the peaks or the coasts of the mountains, where her ancient simulacra existed, or still exist today.

Almost all these primitive feminine images, sculpted in live rock around the Carpathians, are considered by the people to represent "**Baba Dochia**" (Answers to the historical questionnaire; **Hasdeu**, Dictionarul I. ist. si pop. III. 2279; **Marianu**, Sarbatorile la Romani, II, p.94).

The colossal figure of Baba Dochia from the Carpathians of Moldova had a special celebrity until the 18th century (**Cantemir**, Descriptio Moldoviae, 1872, p.24,25).

This simulacrum, as results from the description of Prince Cantemir, was on the high tower rising near the majestic peak of **Cehleu** Mountain. The mountains which separate the country of Moldova from the country of Ardel are called even today by the folk people the Mountains of Cehleu, or the **Mountains of Dochia**, because, according to a tradition, "**Dochia sits in Cehleu**" (Answers to the Historical questionnaire, from the village Calugareni, Neamtu district).

The first days of March (1-12) are called by the Romanian people "**the days of Baba Dochia**" or "**the days of Babe**" (**Marianu**, Ornitologia, I. p.2796; **Albina Carpatilor**, IV. 11).

This is evident proof that in the ancient religion of the Pelasgian tribes from the Istru, the great feast days of the Earth divinity were celebrated in the first days of March, and not around the

beginning of April, exactly as the Romans celebrated the **Matronale**, or feminine Saturnale, during the "Martias Calendas" (**Festus**, 242).

The Romanian legends about the turning to ice and to stone of Baba Dochia in the mountains, are in essence identical, and originate in the same epoch, with the legends about the statues of Niobe, of Ariadna, (**Preller**, Gr. Myth. I, 1854, p.269, 423), and of Venus from the mountain of Lebanon, all of which represented in fact just some archaic simulacra of the Great Mother.

The figure of Dochia or the Great Mother appears under a different form, with a less mythical character, in **Romanian carols**. In these semi-religious folk songs, she is celebrated even today under the name of "**Dochiana**", and is represented as a very beautiful virgin, who never grows old. Her family wealth consists of flocks of sheep, herds of oxen, cows and horses. Many woo her, but she refuses to wed "until the white spring comes, when the flowers are in bloom".

The same reminiscences about Rhea or Cybele had been also preserved by the Pelasgian populations of Asia Minor.

According to neo-Phrygian traditions, Rhea or Cybele had been a virgin of extraordinary beauty, who from an excess of moral virtue did not want to get married (**Diodorus Siculus**, lib. III. 58).

She was represented in ancient paintings sitting in a chariot, dressed in fine clothes, on which shone jewels and precious metals (**Albericus**, De deorum imagine, c. 12).

She appears in Romanian carols under the name of "**Nina Dochiana**". She has vineyards and is the daughter of "**Badita Migdale**" (**Sbiera**, Carols, p.13-14).

In the religion of the Roman people, Magna Mater was also worshipped as "**Dea Migale**", a word which the Roman authors derived from ***megale***, epithet of the Great Mother (Fast. Praenest. C. I. L. I. p.316).

Finally, in the carols called "**well-wishes with the plough**", in which are celebrated in such a beautiful way the benefits of agriculture, Rhea, the goddess of earth's fertility, appears as "**Beautiful Dochiana**", as a "**proud lady**" with "**white arms**" (**Homer** has applied this epithet to Juno in his Iliad, without making any sense, white arms were a distinctive trait of the Great Mother), and has at the same time the honorific title of "**Mother**" (**Alecsandri**, Folk poetry, p.390).

There is no contrast between these two types of folk traditions regarding the Baba Dochia turned to stone, and the beautiful Dochiana. In the Romanian carols is celebrated the youth, extraordinary beauty and chastity of the Great Mother, while the legends refer to the second part of her life, especially to her apotheosis [1].

[1**. Dochia** or **Dochiana** of the Romanian folk legends and carols has nothing to do with the so-called Christian martyr **Eudocia**, who had neither cult, nor legends in these countries.
The fathers of the church, in order to give a Christian character to the pagan feast day of the 1st of March, called **Dochia** at Istru and maybe even in some parts of Asia Minor, consecrated this day to a **supposed** martyr from Lebanon, with the name of **Eudocia**. It is interesting even the legendary history of this Eudocia. The authors of **Martyrologium romanum** present the emperor **Trajan**, the conqueror of **Dacia**, as a persecutor of **Eudocia**].

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XII. 12. Deciana and Caloian. Cybele and Attis. Sibylla Erythrea or Dacica.

Dochia or **Dochiana** also appears in the traditions of the Romanian people as the sad Mother, who looks everywhere for her beloved son, called "**Caloian**" (Scaloian, Calian), who had lost his way in some woods, and, unable to return, had died there.

Romanians have even today an important religious custom from the cult of the Great Mother.
When there is **a big draught** in spring, the Romanian girls make a big doll from yellow clay, in the shape of a man, which they adorn with ribbons, with colored pieces of fabric and with flowers, and they put on its head a piece of an eggshell as a cap. In other places it is dressed in folk costume, with leather peasant sandals and fur cap (Noua Revista Romana, 1900, II. p.94). This doll, they say, represents **young Caloian**; and on Tuesday, in the third week after Easter, the girls place this clay figure in a coffin, one girl represents the priest, another the deacon, wail, cry, some of them even with tears, invoking it in their lamentations with the words: "**Caloiane, body of Deciana**", meaning child of **Deciana**, or "**Scaloiene Scaloian**, body of **Dician**" (**Noua Revista Romana**, 1900, II, p.95; **Marian**, Sarbatorile, II. p.302), or "**Caloiene, Ian**, body of **Dician**".
These young vestals take then and bury the doll (or dolls) in a place near water, and after the burial they give alms. The third day after this ceremony, the girls go again to the grave of Caloian, exhume it, lament again over it, place it in a reed coffin, light candles and make it float on the Danube or some other water or river. In some places only girls take part in this procession. In others, groups of boys and girls, from the different partitions (tribes) of the village.
In other localities **two dolls** are made, one of masculine sex, the other feminine, representing the "**Father of the Sun**" and the "**Mother of rain**". Both are called **Scaloieni**. And in the village Seimenii-mari from Constanta district they make **three dolls** called **Scaloieni**, which represent a man, a woman and a child.
The feminine doll is called in lamentations "**Scaloiana Iana**, body of **Deciana**", or "**Caloiana Iana**, head of **tutuiana**". (**Varro** tells us - VII. 44 - that **Tutulati** were called in Rome those who during the sacrifices covered their head with a pointed cap).
After this ceremony also finishes, there is a big feast, new alms, called "**the alms of Caloian**", the young people pay local musicians, and after the feast and alms they make a big "hora" (TN – dance in a circle) and dance until night.
According to the folk traditions, this was the day when the small child Caloian died.

It is usually celebrated on the third Thursday after Easter. In that day, called "**Caloian**" or "**Scaloian**", nobody works. The origin of this religious belief and custom from the Lower Danube harks back to the ancient Pelasgian times. It was a big folk celebration at the beginning of spring, for the prosperity of vegetation and agriculture.

With the Romans, this festivity had the name of **Caianus** (C. I. L. I. p.390). It began at 28 March (**INITIUM CAIANI**) and ended at the Ides of May, when the Vestals, in the presence of the priests and magistrates, threw in the Tiber from Sublicius Pons 24 dolls or reed simulacra which they called **Argaei**, meaning clay figures (**Festus**, p.17; **Varro**, L.L.VII.48; **Ovid**, Fast. III. 791, V. 625).

The populations of Pelasgian origin of Asia Minor had the same legends and the same religious custom, which still existed during the Roman antiquity.
While at north of the Lower Danube **Caloian** was the pampered son of "**Deciana**", or the Great Mother, he appears in Phrygian legends as a young shepherd extraordinarily handsome, called **Attis**, whose love was sought by the Great Mother, called by them **Cybele**.
This Attis was, according to the legends of Asia Minor, the son of a Phrygian called **Calaus** (**Pausanias**, lib. VII. 17.9), and his mother's name was **Nana** (**Arnobius**, adv. G. IX. 5.4).
Attis, the son of Calaus of the Phrygians, is identical with young Caloian from the religious legends and customs of the Romanian people, and the name **Nana** of his mother appears in Romanian carols as **Nina Dochiana**. As Attis is the son of Calaus in the neo-Phrygian legends, similarly the Great Mother or Cybele appears in Greek inscriptions with the epithet of ***Koilana***, meaning **Caloiana** (**Goehler**, p.69 - C. I. G. 3886, D. 270).

The tradition is the same. The difference is only that, while the Romanian legend has preserved its primitive character, moral-religious, in the traditions of Asia Minor, influenced by the Greek erotic spirit, young Attis, the son of Calaus, appears as the favorite of Cybele or the Great Mother. And similarly, there existed in Asia Minor too, until the Roman epoch, the custom of celebrating the burial of Attis, the son of Calaus, when the earth suffered from drought.

Diodorus Siculus writes regarding this (III. 59.7): "In Phrygia, happening once an epidemic, and on another hand, the earth suffering of **drought**, the people consulted the oracle regarding the means by which to repel these calamities. The oracle told them **to bury the body of Attis and to worship Cybele as a divinity**. But because of the passing of time from the body of Attis nothing had remained, the Phrygians made the image of the youth, which they then buried with lamentations and funerary honors, and this custom they practice constantly to our days".
This is an important document for the origin of the cult of Cybele or the Great Mother in Asia Minor. According to Diodorus, the oracle had ordered the Phrygians to bury the body of Attis and to worship the Great Mother, or Cybele, in order to be protected from epidemics and drought.
Or, in other words, the cult of Cybele was imported on the territory of Asia Minor from other Pelasgian lands, especially from the region of the Lower Danube, connected to Asia Minor through many ethnic, economic and religious ties.

Finally, there still existed in Greco-Roman antiquity another tradition, which placed the country of Cybele at the Hyperboreans, at north of the Lower Istru.
According to this tradition, the origin of which goes back also to the Pelasgian populations of Asia Minor, Apollo, fired with love for beautiful Cybele, had wandered with her from Nysa to the **Hyperboreans** (**Diodorus Siculus**, III. 59.6).

But which was the origin of the name **Cybele**, has remained a historical enigma to this day.

Strabo tells us in his Geography (XII. 5. 3), that the Mother of gods was so called after the mountain Cybele from Phrygia, where she was worshipped.
But the origin of this name was completely different (**Daremberg**, Dictionnaire des antiquites, I. p.1679: " those mountains of Cybele…have probably existed only in the imagination of those who wanted to explain first the name of Cybele").

Even from the most remote times **Gaea**, or the Mother of gods, considered as a benevolent goddess, was worshiped too as **a prophetic divinity** (**Hesiod**, Theog. v. 463; **Cicero**, Divin. I. 36. 79; **Eschyl**, Eum. 2, calls Gaea **the first prophetess**).
Under the shade of the groves and under the cover of the rocks, the priests and priestesses of the Great Mother practiced in those extremely religious times, the art of divination and the primitive medical sciences (**Heim**, Incantamenta magica. Lipsiae, 1892, p.504).
In folk Romanian incantations, the Mother of gods appears even today under the name of "Maica Domnului" (TN – Mother of God), as the guardian of life and health, who brings help and solace to the sick.

The name **Cybele**, by its form and also by its meaning, is identical with the term **Sibyl**, an archaic Pelasgian word, which means **prophetess** (this also resulting from the epithet of the great Mother of ***Sipilena***).
This word has been preserved to this day as an obscure topographical name in some mountainous regions of the Carpathians, an old memory of the sanctuaries of the Mother of gods, where once her oracles were consulted.
In the northern parts of Transylvania, between the old district of Maramures and Nasaud, the highest mountain is called even today **Tibles** (TN – read Tziblesh), while two others are called the **Big Tibles** and the **Small Tibles**. Another height in the vicinity is called **Caliman** (Kerus manus) and still in this region, where traces of ancient, vanished monasteries can still be found, we find also the "**Peak of Sibila**" and the "**Valley of Sibila**". Another mountain on the territory of Romania, in Gorj district, bears also the name of "**Sibille**" (**Frundzescu,** Dictionar topographic, p.436). Finally, a village on the Olt valley, close to Cozia monastery, is called **Jiblea** (=Siblea),

where the remains of an ancient citadel and several mounds can still be seen (**Lahovari**, Dict. Geogr. jud. Arges, p.98).

The name **Sibylla**, as **Suidas** also declares, is Latin. But in fact it is proto-Latin.

In prehistoric antiquity, when the art of divination had such an important role in public and private life, there were a number of famous Sibyls and they were known to classical times by the names of the various lands where they had originated. But none of these prophetic women originated in Greek lands. The Sibyls were inspired by a deep mystical religious feeling, and this character was lacking to the Greek spirit. According to what **Pausanias** tells us (lib. X. 12. 1), the first Sibyls were at **Delphi**, at the renowned temple and oracle, founded there, among the mountains, by the Hyperborean shepherds from north of the Lower Ister.

Here the **Sibyl** called **Erythrea** (**Rosiana**, TN - the Reddish one) had practiced her divinatory art. She had lived, as some say, before the great war between Europe and Asia, and had prophesied the fall of Troy (Apollodorus Erythreaeus, at **Lactantius**, Institt. I. 6; **Suidas**, ***Sibylla***; **Friedlieb**, Oracula Sibyllina, p.69). According to others, she lived in later times. The traditions also told about this Sibyl, that she had had a legendary life, had lived ten human life spans, not less than one thousand years, but according to others she had lived one hundred and twenty years (**Phlegontis Tralliani**, Fragm. Hist. gr. III. p.610).

As **Suidas** tells us, she was born in the village **Marmissos**, near the town Gergittion (Gergitha), on the territory which had been once under Trojan rule.

Sybilla Erythrea, according to what **Pausanias** writes (lib. X. 12. 2), was also mentioned in some hymns in Apollo’s honor. In some of these hymns she is called the sister, wife or daughter of Apollo, meaning the priestess of Apollo, the great god of the Pelasgian light.

And in another hymn she tells us about her origin in the following verses:

(TN – I give here only the Latin translation by **Dindorfius** of **Pausanias**’ s Greek text):

> Inter utrumque sequor medium divasque hominesque,
> Nympha immortali sata, cetophago genitore.
> **Ida** meae matri patria est, mihi patria **rubra**
> **Marpessus**, **matri** quae sacra, amnisque **Aidoneus**.

The Sibyls, who pronounced their oracles in moments of divine inspiration or ecstasy, never wrote their pronouncements, and never remembered them afterwards. They were noted down by certain writers from the colleges of priests of the respective sanctuaries.

The fragment from the hymn of Sibylla Erythrea, presented by Pausanias, is evidently, from the point of view of the confused meaning of its first verses, only a simple Greek translation from the ancient Pelasgian language. The prehistoric Sibyls from Delphi never pronounced their oracles in the Greek language.

This fragment presents a particular historical interest regarding the country and nationality of Sibylla Erythrea.
Various authors of antiquity have considered Sibylla Erythrea as originated from the **Ida** mountain near **Troy**. But we can't find a single authentic document in the entire geographical literature of ancient times, to confirm that the villages Erythrae, Marmessos and the river Aidoneus had existed on the territory of ancient Ilion.

The country of this glorious Sibyl was a completely different one.
The entire chain of the Carpathians was once, as we saw, a holy domain of the great Pelasgian divinities. We find especially in the region of the Carpathians between Transylvania and Hungary, in the mountains rich in gold of the Arimaspes and Agathyrses, the traces of a material prosperity and a moral civilization very advanced for the ante-historical times.
Here is the country of Sibylla Erythrea, according to all the geographical data transmitted to us by the authors of antiquity.

North of the town **Halmagiu**, which constitutes the central point of **Zarand** district, there exists even today the village called **Marmesci** (**Marmissos** with **Suidas, Mermessos** with **Stephanos Byzanthinos**, **Marpessos** with **Pausanias**). In close proximity with this village begins a fine mountain range called **Mama**, or **Moma** (***Mater iera*** with **Pausanias**), which stretches along the river Crisul Negru (TN – the Black Cris),.
In the same region, on the right bank of Crisul Negru, there exists, enclosed among hills and mountains, a significant Romanian village called **Rosia** (TN – today Rosia Montana), and on the eastern side of this village, the river **Iad** (TN – Hell), **Aidoneus** of **Pausanias**, flows northwards and into the river Crisul Repede (TN – the Fast Cris) [1].

> [1. The river **Iad** springs from the mountain The Peak of the Glade, and is used for the transportation of the log rafts when its waters are big. The Greek form **'*Aidoneus*** derives from **'*Aides***, the lower world, **iad**. **Aidoneus** was also an epithet of Pluto].

We have therefore in Pausanias' fragment, four principal geographic data regarding the country of Sibylla Erythrea, and all these are on the territory of the northern Pelasgians, in the lands once renowned for their gold mines, and where three important rivers are even today called **Cris** (***Chriseios***).

The origin of Sibylla Erythrea in the northern lands of Istru is also confirmed by another important series of geographical data.

Fortunately **Suidas**, in his historic-literary lexicon, had extracted from various authors of antiquity a few precious notes about the historical individuality and the country of this illustrious Sibyl.

As he tells us, this genial woman, who occupied such a significant place in the history of the ancient world, was born on the territory of the **Rosieni**, called **Batti**, where later a town was founded, called **Erythrae** (**Rosia**, TN – the **Red** one).

This note is very important. Even today a hill, which is immediately near this village, bears the name of “**Botiascu**”, and two other heights on the upper part of the river **Iad**, bear the name of **Botea** and **Bodea** (Specialkarte, f. 18, XXVII; Petra Boghi, 19. XXVII).



The country of **Sibylla Erythrea** (**Rosiana**)

Suidas also tells us that Sibylla Erythrea was also called by some **Sardana**, **Gergithia**, **Libussa**, **Leucana**, **Samia**, **Rhodia** and **Sicelana**, names given after lands and localities from the same region where we have also the names Marmesci, Mama, Rosia, Iad and Boti.

Sardana corresponds to **Zarandana**, after the name of **Zarand** district, in which is Marmesci village; **Gergithia** corresponds to **Gurguiata**, a hilltop on the south-western part of the village Reieni; **Libyssa** comes from the village **Lapusa**, **Leucana** from the valley **Leuca**, between the

Curcubeta and Zanoga mountains, **Samia** from the villages **Soim** or **Soimus**; **Rhodia** from the gold mines of Zarand, called **Ruda**, **Sicelana** from the locality **Sicula** [2].

[2. The old **Sibyl** of Mermessos (Marmesci) was also known in the Pelasgian lands of Asia Minor under the names of **Lampousa**, **Sarbis** and **Taraxandra** (**Suidas**). There is a surprising similarity between the name of **Sarbis** and the name of the village **Sarbesci**, situated in the proximity of **Moma** mountain. Another village situated south-east of Marmesci is called **Sarb**].

Still in this region, eastward from the sources of the river Iad, on a coast of **Britea** mountain, there is the woody place called **Sivla** (**Buteanu**, Stana de vale, 1887, p.61) a name which we don't find in any other place, and which evidently corresponds to the Greco-Latin form of **Sibylla** or **Sibulla**. This whole region, in which we find grouped together all the geographical data of antiquity related to the country of Sibylla Erythrea, had once important commercial and religious ties with the southern lands.

Sibylla **Rosiana** or Erythrea had received various geographical names, after the various places where she had spent a longer time of her long and unsettled life of inspired woman.

When **Suidas** tells us with some precaution, that the village Marmiss-os and Gertittion are within the limits of the territory over which the Trojans had once ruled, this data refers in fact to the time of the great Trojan empire, about which **Herodotus** also writes (lib. VIII. 20) that the Trojans, crossing once the Bosphorus to Europe, had subjected all the Thracians, spreading their rule to the Ionic Sea.

So, what we have now to also examine, is the data referring to the genealogy of Sibylla Erythrea.

According to what the Greek translation, communicated by **Pausanias**, tells us, the father of Sibylla Erythrea was ***chetophagos***, meaning an eater of **chiti**, marine monsters.

The primitive meaning of these words was incontestably altered. This mistake alone can definitely prove to us that the Hymn of Sibylla Erythrea had been translated from a proto-Latin rustic language, by an ignorant writer.

The original text expresses certainly a completely different idea, meaning, that the father of the Sibyl was a man who ate bread, "pane", "**chita**" in the peasant dialect of the Romanians of Transylvania and Hungary. The Sibyl indicated by these words that he was a farmer, as in antiquity the two large social classes were the farmers and the shepherds.

Suidas, another Greek author who seemingly had in front of him the same archaic text of the hymn, calls the Sybil's father **Aristo-crates** (a big eater). These are the same words, but with a different interpretation.

And as others tell, continues **Suidas**, the father of Sibylla Erythrea was called **Crinagoras**.

Here we have again a topical personal name. A high mountain near the river Iad bears even today the name of **Cernagura** (Specialkarte, f. 18. XXVII).

Pausanias calls the mother of Sibylla Erythrea, **Idogenes**, and **Suidas** calls her **Hydale** and **Hydole**. It is the same word in different Greek forms. On the western side of the village **Rosia**, on the beautiful valley of **Holod**, there is the village called today **Hodis** (Hoghis), while a significant hill near Rosia is called "**Dampu Hodisanului**" (Ibid. 18. XXVI. XXVII). When the fragment communicated by Pausanias tells us that the mother of Sibylla Erythrea was **Idogena**, it is certain that we have here a corrupt form of **Hodisiana**, or **Hodigena**.
The geographical origin of Sibylla Erythrea is wholly established.

On the basis of these geographical and genealogical data, as well as on the basis of the great ethnic and religious movement started from north to south in those Pelasgian times, we can state here as an absolute historical truth, that Sibylla Erythrea, the most glorious of those who bore the name of Sibyl, was born in the village **Rosia**, spent some time in the village **Marmesci**, near the **Moma** or **Mama** mountain (where a renowned sanctuary of the **Great Mother** probably existed), and in the hamlets on the valley of **Iad**, localities situated in the districts **Zarand - Bihor**.
She was the daughter of a farmer, and her mother was **Hodisiana** of origin.
We return now to the Greek fragment from the hymn of the Sibyl, which we can translate as such:

> I was born among men and goddesses,
> I am an immortal woman, my father ate bread (was a farmer),
> After my mother I am **Hodisiana**, and my country is **Rosia**,
> **Marmesci**, the sacred place of the **Mother** (great), and the river **Iad**.

These verses also contain another entirely characteristic particularity.
Here Sibylla calls herself, with all her religious certainty, an "**immortal woman**". This was not a simple personal conviction of the Sibyl. She expresses here one of the fundamental principles of the Pelasgian religion from the Lower Danube.
The **Getae** were those who, as **Herodotus** tells us (lib. IV. 93), considered themselves immortal.

To Sibylla Erythrea was attributed in antiquity a famous collection of predictions, known in the whole of Greece, whose primitive redaction was going back to ante-Homeric times.
Apart from oracles, as **Suidas** tells us, she also wrote about palpitations and different songs.
And the same author tells us in another place, basing his information on various biographical sources, that Sibylla Erythrea wrote in **heroic verses** three books about Divination, and those she took to Rome at the time of the consuls, or according to what others say, at the times of Tarquinius, hoping that she will receive much for them. But when she saw that she was despised, she burned two of the books brought with her, and only one was left, which the Romans bought at a high price. And **Dionysius of Halicarnasus** adds (lib. IV. 62) that king Tarquinius, astonished

by the resolution of this woman, consulted the augurs about the remaining books (according to him Sibylla had brought to Rome nine books, out of which she had burnt six). The augurs, examining the rest of the books, declared to Tarquinius that they had reached the conclusion, from certain signs, that those books had been sent by divinity, and that it was very unfortunate that all the books had not been bought. They advised Tarquinius to pay the whole price to the woman. Then this woman, after giving them the remaining books, told them to keep them with great care, after which she left and was never seen again [3].

[3. In what **language** these books were written, no author tells us. The fact that the Romans had instituted a special college of priests for their conservation and consultation, denotes that special knowledge was required for their **interpretation** (**Livy**, lib. X. 8; **Plau**t, Pseud. I. 1. 23)].

These books of the Sibyl, as results also from traditions, and from the respect shown always for them by the Romans, were characterized by a great religiosity. They conformed to the traditional principles of the old Pelasgian theology, and they had an immense influence on the state life of the Roman people [4].

[4. According to what **Pliny** writes (XIII. 27), the third book of the Sibyl, bought by king Tarquinius Superbus, had burnt together with the Capitolium, in the times of Sulla. After this disaster, the Romans searched in every part of the empire for **the country of Sibylla Erythrea**, hoping to find another copy of her oracles. But their search was without result.
The later sibylline books were only simple compilations from various oracles, in large part not authentic, written in Greek. They did not represent the old Pelasgian doctrines any more; **Tacitus** (Ann. VI. 12)].

Sibylla Erythrea was therefore considered identical with the Sibyl called **Cumana** (**Marc**. Cap. II. 8. 7). But all the historical sources confirm the fact that the Sibyl who brought to Rome the Pelasgians' books of the divine revelation, **was not from Italy** (**Livy**, lib. I. 7).

In ancient traditions, Sibylla Erythrea was also called **Amalthea** and **Albunea**. Both these names have an evident geographical character. They refer to the country, or in other words to the lands from where this legendary Sibyl came.

Amalthea (**Plato**, Phaed. P.315; **Stephanus**, Thesaurus I.gr; **Lactantius**, De falsa religione, c. 6) is only a simple Greek ethnic form of the name of the town **Halmagiu**, the central point of the district of Zarand, near which was the village Marmesci. **Amalthea Marpesia**, as she is called by **Tibullis** (Eleg.II. 5. 67-68), referred therefore to Sibylla Erythrea from **Marmesci**, near **Halmagiu**.

A second name under which Sibylla Erythrea was known in the Rome countryside, was **Albunea** (**Lactantius**, De falsa religione c. 6; **Virgil**, Aen. VII. v. 34) [5].

[5. The various geographical names attributed to the same Sibyl, had as a consequence the fact that the later Greek and Roman authors have arbitrarily multiplied their number. This happened especially to Sibylla Erythrea, who was called **Phrygiana, or from Ida, Cumana, Libyca, Delphica, Sicula, Amalthea, Marpesia, Albunea**, etc].

But on the territory of Italy no locality, town or village ever existed, to which we could reduce with certainty the origin of this name. Sibylla known to Roman history was only a pilgrim in Italy.

The name **Albunea**, given to this holy woman, who had come to Italy from other lands, derives incontestably from the locality rich in gold mines of Dacia, called in Roman epoch **Alburnus major**, part of which was the village **Rosia** of today, **vicus Pirustarum** in Roman official language [6].

> [6. Some wanted to derive the name **Albunea** from **Aquae Albulae** on the plain of **Latium**, but the sanctuary dedicated to Sibylla Albunea was located in **the highest mountains** of Tiber (**Pauly-Wissowa**, R. R, Aquae Albulae)].

So, in Italy too, there had been confusion about the country of Sibylla Erythrea or Rosiana.

Some historical sources call her **Amalthea Marpesia**, meaning from **Marmescii** from **Halmagiu**, as she herself says in the fragment communicated by **Pausanias**. And in other traditions she is called **Albunea** (**Alburnea**), meaning from **Alburnus** or **Rosia** near **Abrud**.

The name of this noble and astute Sibyl shone in prehistoric times not only at Delphi and in Latium, but also in the Pelasgian lands of ancient Germany.

Tacitus tells us (Germania, c.8) that in Germany, in a remote time (olim), a prophetess called **Aurinia** was venerated as a divinity. **Wackernagel** rectifies it to **Albruna** (**Pauly-Wissowa**, R. E. Albruna). **Aurinia** or **Albruna** (= Alburna) is one and the same holy Sibyl from the lands rich in gold of Dacia, who was venerated as a divinity also at Tiber, under the name of **Albunea** [7].

> [7. We find a memory about this renowned "**old mother**" (TN–maica = mother = nun) and her teachings, in the following folk verses, communicated directly from the lands of Cris:
>
> > "Don't work on Sunday, Friday and Wednesday, Holy moon shall beat you;
> > Let's search for the **old mother**, with incense in hand, with **white book underarm**;
> > She is **a little nun**, who kept praying from the book, for the sins of man".
>
> The simulacrum discovered in the bed of the river Anio, represented, as **Lactantius** writes, Sibylla **Albunea** with a book in her hand. It is important to stress that in the verses above, one of the attributes of the "**old nun**" is also a "**white book underarm**"].

Finally, there was another old Roman tradition about Sibylla Erythrea.

Eneas, leaving Troy in order to find another country in the great Pelasgian world, consulted, after the religious custom of those times, the Pelasgian oracle of Dodona, and also Sibylla Erythrea, asking in what part of the world should he, and the emigrated Trojans, settle. Sibylla Erythrea was the one who advised them to go to the western countries (**Dionysius of Halicarnasus**, lib. I. c. 55).

And according to other tradition, Eneas, leaving Troy, came firstly to Thrace, to a "barbarian" people called **Crusaei** (Ibid, lib. I. c. 47, 49), or **Cruseni** (in Romanic form). These received him with hospitality. Eneas stayed with them for a whole winter, after which he left towards Italy.

So, in these traditions about the westward migration of the Trojans, we meet with a curious coincidence: Sibylla Erythrea was originated in the lands of the **Crisuri** (TN – rivers), while the name of a people from barbarian Thrace, very hospitable, was that of **Cruseni**.

This Sibyl from Rosia appears in the history of those remote times as a traveling prophetess, in the service of the Great Mother (**Ovid**, Fast. IV. v. 239-240) and the powerful Pelasgian god (her books were very carefully preserved in the Capitolium, in a stone box, deposited in an underground vault, under the temple of Jupiter optimus maximus).

Inspired by a great religious fervor, she traveled from country to country, changed her abode from one sanctuary to another, placing her talent, art, and spiritual visions, in the service of the priests from the respective oracles. She was a pilgrim at Delphi, Delos and Dodona, a pilgrim on the shores of Asia Minor and Latium, admired and respected everywhere for her wisdom, her universal knowledge and her holy life. **Pliny**, talking about this Sibyl (H. N. VII. 33), says that there was something **divine** in her, and that she had a sort of holy communion with the heavenly powers (**Lactantius**, De ira Dei, cap.22).

Sibyla Erythrea had not been the only one to represent the northern oracles in southern lands.

A whole group of northern prophets were known in antiquity, like the **Hyperborean shepherds**, who founded the oracle of Delphi (Pausanias, lib. X. 5. 7), like **Abaris the Hyperborean**, who wrote a whole book of oracles known under the name of "**Scythicae**" (**Suidas**, ***'Abaris***), and also like the anonymous founders of Apollo's oracle of Delos. Finally, **Latona** (Leto) and **Ilithyia**, worshipped as divinities, and the virgins **Arge** and **Opis**, celebrated in the religious songs of the Delians and Ionians (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. 35), belong to the same category of holy women gone south from Hyperborean lands.

Sibylla Erythrea, by her biographical data, as well as by her severe religious principles not influenced by the Greek spirit, was an illustrious representative of the wisdom and religion of the Hyperboreans, or Pelasgians from north of the Istru.

"The people of Ellada call me a woman from "**another country**" says she in her oracles [8].

[8. In various Romanian manuscripts from the 17th and 18th centuries, which are also only simple copies or translations from other older manuscripts, this Sibyl is mentioned under the name of "**Savila**".
She is the wisest woman of the ancient world. For her generosity, nobility, and spiritual qualities, she becomes queen (**Lactantius** calls her also the most distinguished and noble of all the Sibyls).
But she appears especially rich in **gold** and **precious stones**. She travels even to **Palestine**, and, convinced in the superiority of her spirit, she tests the wisdom of king **Solomon**.

According to one of these manuscripts her country is **tera** "**Ugorescu**", meaning **Unguresca** (TN – Hungarian country). So, in a manuscript from 1760 it is said about this Sibyl that: "she was **from the end of the earth**, where is the precious gold called **sufir**", that "**Savila was so wise**, that **other kings from the ends of the earth sent for her advice**…that she gave to the church of **Sion** many precious objects, and clothes, and **gold** and **precious stones**, and that she went back to her country with great honor" (**Gaster**, Literatura, p.326; Chrestomatie, II. p.71-72).

The country of Sibylla is characterized in this manuscript as very rich in precious metals and stones. In this regard are important the words of **Ammianus** (XXII, 8), **Herodotus** (IV. 104) and **Fridvalszky** (Mineralogia M. Principatus Transilvaniae, p.174), about the diamonds of the **Agathyrses** of Transylvania.

In Hebrew traditions this divine "Savila" is called "the queen of Saba" (Cart. Reg. I. 10).

In a Romanian manuscript **Bible** from the 17th century, this Sibyl is also talked about.
We reproduce from this manuscript the extract published by **Gaster** (Romanian folk literature. p.338): "She becomes queen. One night, **her boyars from tera Ugorescu** see nine suns rising in the sky, each having a different shape and light. **Savila** explains this dream, saying that those nine suns meant nine peoples which shall rule the world".

The old Sibylline books of the Romans, as results from **Titus Livy**, contained explanations and predictions for extraordinary events, for omens, cases of pestilence, violent changes in atmosphere, hard winters, draught, lightning, thunder, earthquakes, etc (lib. III.10; IV.21; V.13; VII.6.27; XXI.62; XXIV.10.44; XXV.7; XXVI.23; XXVII.4; XXXVI.37).
The lightning and thunder were especially considered as a manifestation of divine will, according to old Pelasgian ideas. Even from the most remote times, there existed with the Pelasgian populations a very developed doctrine about lightning and thunder, doctrine based on a long observation of phenomena and events. The whole system of this science, regarding future events, was presented in some sacred books called **libri fulgurales** or **tonitruales**, which the Romans had borrowed from the northern Pelasgians or Turseni (Etruscans).

Such books, in manuscript and print, have existed with the Romanian people until the last centuries under the name of books for earthquakes and **Gromovnice**, or books for thunder. They are written in the same style as the sibylline books, based on astronomical principles. Exactly like the ancient books of the Romans (borrowed from the Etruscans, as it is told), the Romanian books distinguish between the day and night lightning.

The origin of these books goes back to a very remote epoch. They hail from the times of ante-Christian religion, when divination was incorporated in the public cult.
We will quote here some examples from these Romanian books regarding lightning and earthquakes. According to **Sbornicul** of the Romanian Academy of 1799: "The sign of Leo: **if thunder** in Leo's number, death among men and spoilt wheat…and **on the western side** (TN – side = **lature**) grief among men…and **if thunder or lightning** at noon, **much rain** and famine…; **the valleys and streams will fill with water**…at **Ram** will be fine and the crop of the earth will be on **that side**…and if **earthquake**, many kings will be troubled, and the boyars will die in wars…and it will be **great fear on the western side**. And crops will be all over the earth and in that place where the earth will shake, winter will be hard; and a great man will arise, very powerful…and if **lightening or thunder at night**…the springs and the streams will dry out".

We have to note here that **Ram** mentioned in this fragment is not presented as the illustrious capital of a great empire from west to east (TN – Rome in Romanian folk speech), but only as a somewhat more important national city from the western regions, while **lature** (TN – side) seems to infer here **Latium**.
Under the rule of pious **Numa**, according to what the ancient Annals of the Roman pontiffs said, terrible lightning happened, which had terrified Rome's people, so that the king was constrained by the instructions given him by his wife Egeria, to ask the divinity how could he avoid the certain disasters announced by this omen.
Ovid (Fast. III. 285 seqq), who used for the description of the Roman Feasts the ancient religious books of the pontiffs, their astronomical calendars and treatises, describes this omen in words which show a big similarity with the text of the Romanian Gromovnic: "much rain", "the valleys and streams will fill with water", "great fear in the western side".

Therefore the primitive concept of the Romanian (Greek and Slav) books about thunder, lightning and earthquakes, goes back incontestably to some very remote times. We have to mention here too, that the so-called **Libri Etrusci** (Etruscan Books), were of **Hyperborean origin**.
The dominant characteristic of the Hyperboreans was to know the future. They were the holy people of the ancient world, all the gods attended their funeral feasts, they had founded the first oracles in Hellada, Asia Minor and Libya, they were the agents of the divine voice in antiquity].

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XIII. *IEROI BOMOI*. THE CYCLOPEAN ALTARS ON CARAIMAN MOUNTAIN.

We dedicate this chapter to some extremely antique altars on Caraiman mountain.

Between Prahova and Ialomita valleys, behind **Caraiman** mountain, on the coast that leads to "**Omul**" peak, or towards the simulacrum of ***Zeus aigiochos***, spreads a beautiful meadow, and in the middle of it rises a significant group of isolated rocky outcrops with unusual shapes, which present a mysterious aspect. Here can be seen even today the gigantic remains of a sacred prehistoric site, where the sanctuaries and altars, where the statues of the divinities and the seats reserved for the people were formed by the natural masses of the rocks. Here each rock seems that it represented once a certain figure, because nature could not give these stones shapes so unusual. Time has destroyed though almost all the primitive shapes of these mysterious figures. Nevertheless, their remains seem to tell us that man's hand had contributed surely to these curious shapes, that here was once a sacred site consecrated to a prehistoric religion, a place of common assembly for the ancient pastoral and agricultural tribes. (The height of this point above sea level is 2148m).

The Romanian people call these enigmatic outcrops "**Babe**" (TN – Old women), a traditional name which attests that some of these primitive monuments, today disfigured, once represented the simulacra of some mountain divinities, called in Roman theology at the time of the empire **Deae majores, Deae veteres**. And in truth, one of these formless figures, contemplated attentively, seems to have once been the gigantic simulacrum of a feminine divinity.

The only figures of this miraculous temple of antiquity, which have still preserved their almost primitive shapes, are **three altars** of gigantic dimensions, grouped together in the shape of a triangle [1].

[1. These altars can't be considered from any point of view as a consequence of a simple **erosion**. Their shapes, more or less **regular**, and especially the **similarity** between them, indicate in a quite clear way that these figures are not the result of the dissolving action of water and even less of the glaciers from the Pliocene or Quaternary epochs.
Such altars cut in live rock were found by **Pausanias** also in Attica and in the Peloponnesus during the time of the Antonines (Descriptio Graeciae, I. 32. 1, II. 31. 3, 32. 7; **Pauly-Wissowa**, R. E. I. p.1669)].

Each altar is formed from a single block of stone and all three present the same characteristic shape of the altars of the Mycenaean epoch. They have neither inscriptions, nor bas-reliefs, and even if they had once some hieratical signs, the remote time has destroyed them.

The space occupied by these three altars is 11m long. The height of the great altar (ara maxima) is 3.50m, of the western (second) altar is 3.50m and of the eastern (third) one is 3.10m.

The diameter of the pedestal of the great altar is 3.80m, of the second is 2.30m and of the third is 2.20m. The upper part, or the sacrificial table, is square at the first and third altars, and round or more elliptical at the second.



The **cyclopean altars** on Caraiman mountain (Romania)
View from NE. After a photo from 1899.

In prehistoric antiquity **the altars** consecrated to divinities were placed **on the same heights** consecrated to them.
Near these altars, covered only by the high vault of the sky, or the branches of oaks and beeches, the fundamental acts of the cult were celebrated, the prayers and the sacrifices. At the feet of these altars were made the most solemn oaths, here persecuted people looked for refuge and protection, here was the place of assembly regarding the common affairs of the tribes, here were celebrated their great festivities.

On the highest peak of mount **Ida**, named **Gargaron**, as **Homer** tells us (Iliad, VIII. v. 48), there was a sacred place and an altar consecrated to the supreme divinity of the Trojan times, ***Zeus patroos*** or Jupiter avus (**Eschyl**, Fragm. Nr. 169).
On the territory of **Attica**, according to **Philochorus**, Cecrops was the first to dedicate an altar to Saturn and Rhea (**Macrobius**, Sat. I. 10).
The inhabitants of **Arcadia**, emigrated there from the northern parts of the Lower Danube, since Neolythic times, revered their supreme divinity on top of **Lycaeu** mountain, where an earth tumulus served as altar to ***Zeus Lychaios***, and two columns on which stood two gilded eagles (aquilae) rose in front of the altar towards the east (**Pausanias**, lib. VIII. 38. 6).

But the most famous altar consecrated to great ***Zeus*** was at Olympia in the Peloponnesus, erected, as traditions said, by Hercules or other heroes, two centuries after his time.

This altar was formed, as **Pausanias** describes it, of ashes and the burnt remains of the victims. This altar had in his time a base periphery of 38.53m and was 6.78m high. The sacrificial animals were brought to the foot of the altar, were slaughtered, and the thighs were burnt on top of the altar. Two stairs formed of the ashes of the victims rose from near the foot of the altar, on both its sides, right to the top (Ibid, lib. V. 13. 8).
Women and girls could approach only to the foot of the altar, but only the men were allowed to climb to the top (we find the same religious ideas even today with the Romanian people: "**the woman** is not allowed to enter **the altar**").

The oldest altar In **Italy** was dedicated to **Saturn**. King Ianus, writes **Macrobius** (Sat. I. 7), wanting to elevate again Saturn's name and dues, as they had diminished, had erected an altar to him, to receive sacrifices and be worshipped as a god. On another hand **Dionysius of Halikarnassus** writes (I. 34. 38; VI. 1) that Saturn's altar had been consecrated by Hercules and was on mount Capitolium.
Another renowned prehistoric altar also extant in **Latium** had been consecrated to Hercules in the middle of a forest, and was called **Ara maxima**, certainly because its enormous size (**Virgil**, Aen. VIII.271).
All these prehistoric altars mentioned by the authors of antiquity, appear to have existed in lands once occupied by Pelasgians. And in truth their origin was Pelasgian.

We are facing now the important historical matter of who were the divinities to whom these grandiose altars on Caraiman mountain were consecrated.

The prehistoric religion of Dacia, meaning from the Urano-Saturnian times, had been shaped to answer the needs of the pastoral and agricultural tribes.
Varro, one of the most erudite and active Roman writers, tells us the names of the divinities revered by the Latin farmers. In his treatise De Re Rustica (I. 1), he makes the following invocation: because the gods help the people who work, I shall firstly invoke the twelve gods "**consentes**", but not the urban ones, but I shall address those who rule especially the farmers, so I shall firstly invoke the **Sky** and the **Earth**, **Jupiter** (Saturnus) and **Tellus**, from whom all the produce of agriculture come, and who are called **Parentes magni** (TN – Parinti mari, Great parents). In the second place I shall invoke the **Sun** and the **Moon**, whose course the farmers follow when they saw and reap.

The same author also tells us in his treatise about the Latin language (L. L. V. 74), that the altars consecrated at **Rome** by king Tatius, a Sabine by origin, were dedicated to the divinities **Ops**, **Flora**, **Vedius**, **Jupiter**, **Saturn**, **Sun**, **Moon**, etc.

From a historical and etymological point of view, **Vediovis** or **Vejovis** represented **Vetus deus**. “**Vij”** in Transylvania means old man, “**mos**”.

In the old Pelasgian religion, **Ops**, as goddess of earth fertility, and **Flora**, the goddess of fecundity, were almost identical, as were Vedius, Jupiter and Saturn. These divinities represented under different sacred names, the **Earth** and the **Sky**.

The **Scythians**, according to what **Herodotus** writes (lib. IV. 59), honored mostly **Vesta** of all gods, then ***Zeus*** (Saturn) and **Gaea**, believing that the Earth was ***Zeus***’ wife, and after these they worshipped **Apollo** and **Celestial Venus**, **Hercules** and **Mars**. In antique theology, **Vesta** was considered as the same divinity as Gaea or Rhea. She represented the earth as throne of the Olympic gods, as common and stable hearth of the universe.

Finally, we also mention here that king **Filip III** of Macedonia (d.178bc), in the expedition against the Dentheletians (people near the frontier with Mesia – **Ptolemy**, III. 11), erected on top of the Hem mountain two altars, one consecrated to ***Zeus***, the other to the **Sun** (**Livy**, lib. XL. 22).

On the basis of these historical documents, we can suppose in all probability that **the great altar** on Caraiman mountain was consecrated to the supreme divinities of the Pelasgian times, the **Sky** and the **Earth**, or Saturn, as ***Zeus aristos megistos***, ruler of the universe, and Rhea, who represented the Great mother of gods, Gaea or the Earth.

The simulacrum of Saturn, without equal in the Pelasgian world, was (and still is) on the same crest of Bucegi mountain, and doubtless it needed to also have an altar close by.

The second altar on Caraiman mountain, whose upper part is round, was without doubt consecrated to the **Sun** and the **Moon** (Apollo and Diana), the most revered divinities in Pelasgian religion after the Sky and the Earth. Apollo’s place of honor according to antique religious ideas, was at ***Zeus***’ right side (Preller, Gr. Myth. I. 1854, p.172), and the second altar has the same position relative to Ara maxima of Saturn.

As for the destination of **the third altar**, we find its explanation in the religious history of the **Dacian** people. **Mars** (Marte) or **Gradivus pater**, was one of the national divinities most revered by the Getae and the Scythians (**Virgil**, Aen. III. 35; **Valerius Flaccus**, Argon. V. 619; **Herodotus**, lib. IV. c. 59. 62). At the same time, Mars was venerated by the Italic tribes as god of war and of agriculture (**Catonis**, De Re rustica. c. 141). And the feminine divinity closest to Mars was in Latin traditions **Anna** (**Feriae**, C. I. L. I. p.388; **Ovid**, Fast. Lib. III. v. 653).

To this divinity called Anna, the Ides of Marte were consecrated, and she represented the beginning of spring, identical with **Flora** of the Romans and **Celestial Venus** of the Scythians.

On the same crest of Bucegi mountain, on its southern part, another group of three prehistoric altars still exists, also formed by the natural rocks of the earth [2].

[2. The number of **three** altars, as results from different historical data, was based on a certain religious principle, about which we can't be sure today.
Three altars are mentioned by **Herodotus** (III. 156) in Apollo's temple in the island from near the city of Buto in Egypt. **Three altars** were dedicated by the Heraclids in the Peloponnesus.
Romanian incantations, which contain important elements from prehistoric times, still mention a "**great church with three altars**" (**Alecsandri**, Folk poetry, p.272; **Lupascu**, Medicina babelor, p.32)].

Today only one among this new trio of altars still shows a somewhat regular square shape.
The upper part or the sacrificial table of this altar has a width of 2.80m and a length of 4.11m.



The **cyclopean altar** on the mountain **Dorul Peak**, S-SW of Caraiman mountain
(Romania, Prahova district)
(From a photo from the year 1900).

The height which dominates these three altars has the name of "**Dorul**" (2008m) or the "**Peak of Dor**" (TN – Varful Dorului / dor = longing, yearning), or the **Peak with Dor**.
This name is not a poetical expression.

On one of the inscriptions of Roman Africa, where a powerful ethnic Pelasgian stratum existed since the most remote times, we find today an obscure mention about **cultores Doripatri** (C. I. L. VIII. nr. 9409).
"**Dorus pater**" is the name of an archaic divinity, which still echoes today in one Romanian carol: "I don't sing to the king, but only to the **dor**, to the **dor** and the son, of the sky, of the earth…(**Marienescu**, Carols, p.46).
This is the same divinity venerated in the Roman Carmina Saliarae as **duonus Cerus**, or **domnul ceriului** (TN – ruler of the sky).
Supposing that each of these six altars had been dedicated from the beginning to two divinities each, we will have in these monuments the authentic traces of the cult of **twelve pastoral and agricultural divinities**.

In Olympia Hercules had similarly consecrated in six altars for twelve principal divinities (**Herodorus**, Fragm. 29 in Fragm. Hist. graec. II. 36), and the farmers of Italy worshipped the same number of gods and goddesses, who made up the great celestial counsel (**Consentes**).

The general character of these altars is **theogonic**. They belong to religious principles much more severe, much more archaic then were presented in Homer's epoch.
Exactly as the simulacrum of ***Zeus euruopa*** is cut in live rock on the top of Omul mountain, similarly the altars of the divinities revered on Caraiman mountain are formed from the natural rocks of the earth. Gaea, or the earth, was, according to the ancient Pelasgian doctrines, the common mother of the gods and men.

Therefore, it is without doubt that the divinities who had their principal terrestrial residence on the old Olympos of theogony, also had their altars there (**Hesiod**, Theog. v. 117, 124).

One of these divine altars had in ante-Hellenic times a special religious and historical celebrity.
Near this sacred altar the gods themselves performed some religious acts and swore a loyalty oath to each other in extraordinary cases.
This was **the principal altar** consecrated to the divinities of the **Earth** and the **Sky**, because, as **Homer**'s **Iliad** (XV. V. 36), **Odyssey** (V. v. 184) and **Apollo's hymn** (v. 84) tell, the great oath of the gods was "on Earth, Sky and the water of the river Styx".
After the great war with the Titans, the figure of this altar was made eternal with a constellation on the sky called in Latin literature **Ara** and **Altare**.

The grammarian **Hyginis** writes about this memorable altar of the gods the following:
"According to what it is said, the gods made on this altar their first **religious ceremonies and their pact** when they decided to start the terrible war with the **Titans**. **This altar had been made by the Cyclops**. Then the humans, following the example of the gods, introduced too the custom to make sacrifices before starting to achieve something" (Poeticon Astronomicon, lib. II. Ara).
Eratosthenes, the most distinguished of the Alexandrine learned men, also writes:
"Near this altar the gods swore the oath, binding themselves to one another, when Jove went to war against **Saturn**, and after they won, they **put this altar on the sky**. This altar is used by humans at their common feasts, or drinking assemblies, and near this altar they sacrifice at festivities; then they touch the altar with the hand, believing that this is a sign of good faith. This altar has two stars in its upper part and two other at its base. There are four stars in all" (Catasterismi, Ed. Schaubach, 1795, c. 39).
The poet **Marcus Manilius** calls this constellation **templum mundi, ara victrix and ara maxima.**

" Beyond the Centaurus", writes he, "there is the "**Temple of the world**" and there the "**Altar**" is seen glowing, **victorious** after the completion of the religious ceremonies, at the time when the angry **Earth** rose in arms against the **Sky** the enormous **Gigants**, created from the clefts of their mother, generations with different faces and bodies of different natures. Then even the gods themselves looked for other, more superior gods. Even Jove feared and doubted that he will be able to do what he had to do. He saw the Earth raising, and believed that the entire nature had turned upside-down, mountains rising all the time on top of other mountains, so that even the stars ran away from these enormous masses that reached up towards them. Jove had never before seen such hostile assaults, and did not know if higher powers than his existed. Then Jove formed this altar from stars, which even now glows as **the greatest altar**…At the feet of this altar the Gigants fell sacrificed and Jove took in his right hand the violent lightning as weapon, only after he declared himself priest before the gods" (Astronomicon, lib. I. v.413 seqq; V. v.340 seqq).

The sacred altar of the gods about which Hyginis and Eratosthenes tell us that it had been made by the Cyclops, that the gods had sworn their great oath on it, and that was therefore on the old, Uranic Olympos, is the same as the great altar on Caraiman mountain, consecrated as we saw to the divinities of the Sky and Earth [3].

[3. In an archaic Romanian ballad has been preserved to this day the memory of this altar or the "large stone table", and also the tradition about the common feasts or drinking parties, as Eratosthenes calls them, which the giants had near this altar, which was on the mountain called "Ceriu" (TN – Sky), near Brasov:

High on the **mountains**, to the **sky** (ceriu) he climbed,
Among the oaks he sat,
At the **large stone table**,
Drink the giants (Novacii), don't get drunk….

*(**Francu**, Motii, p.199)*

The same mountains, identical with **Caraiman – Omul** of today, appear In other ballads published by **Tocilescu** (Mater. Folk. I. 107,108,1238), under the name of **Ceridel**, **Cerdel** and the mountains **Sterii Delului** (Gr*.* ***stela***, stone column). We will come back to these ballads when we will speak about the Romanian traditions regarding **Saturn**. **Homer** also mentions the feasts and common drinking of the gods on **Olympos** and **Uranos** (Iliad, I. 601; IV. 3; XXIV. 97 seqq)].

The Roman poet **Papinius Statius** mentions often the **sacred mountain of Dacia** and praises the emperor Domitian for driving out the Dacians from **the top** of this mountain, where they had made an oath together, and for giving it afterwards back to them, by his own indulgence (Thebaid, I. v.19-20; Ibid, Sylvae, III. 3. v.169).

Another contemporary poet, the renowned **Martial** (Epigr. Lib. VIII. 78; Ibid. Epigr. VIII. 50), calls **Domitian**'s triumph over the Dacians "**triumph over the Hyperboreans**" and in another place "**triumph over the Gigants**". Finally, the same Martial, in another epigram of his celebrates this way Domitian's victories: "Three times did he cross the treacherous horns (the legendary arms) of the **Sarmatic Ister**; three times he bathed his sweaty horse in the snow of the **Getae**; and always

modest, he refused the triumphs which he deserved, and brought with him only the glory to have defeated the **world of the Hyperboreans**" (Ibid, Epigr. Lib. IX. 102).

After these victories over the Dacians, **Domitian** threw a magnificent feast in Rome, for all the social classes, the patricians, soldiers and the simple people. With this occasion, according to Martial, the entire Rome tasted from the **divine ambrosia** (Ibid, Epigr. VIII. 50). Domitian, who only after long and hard battles had taken the holy mountain of Dacia (**Statius**, Sylvae, I.v.80-81), had apparently taken from the pastoral tribes of this mountain, and had also brought to Rome the national food of the ancient Olympian divinities, called in Greek traditions ***ambrosia***.

So, the holy mountain on which the Dacians had sworn their oath before starting the war with the Romans, appears at Statius and Martial as the famous mountain from the country of the Hyperboreans (see the following chapter), where the gods had made their oath near the great altar to fight together against the Titans, and where the ancient Gigants had assaulted the Olympian gods.

We also find an obscure mention about the sacred altars, ***ieroi bomoi***, of the great Olympic divinities, in the writings of **Hesiod** (Opera et Dies, v. 136; Ibid, Theog. v. 557).

This author tells us also that on the snowy Olympos from the ends of the earth, there was also an assembly place, ***agora***, for the gods and the people (Ibid, Scut. Herc. v. 204).

These agorae of the ancient Pelasgian times were usually decorated with the statues and altars of divinities, with stone chairs and porticoes for the people. Often surrounded with enormous blocks of stone, they served as places of assembly for the tribes and their most important festivities, feasts, public games and fairs.

The same aspect of a prehistoric agora, but in a primitive, gigantic form, is also presented by that particular site of the fine terrace of Caraiman mountain, decorated even today with the remains of some disfigured statues, called Babe, and with sacrificial altars.

We conclude:

By the geographical significance that the south-eastern corner of the Carpathians had in the history of the Pelasgian migration, but especially by the extended cult of ***Zeus aigiochos***, whose principal monument is here, these enormous stone tables from Caraiman mountain, appear in everything as the sacred altars of ancient theogony [4].

[4. Another prehistoric altar **cut in live rock** appears to have been the so-called "**Table** (TN – masa) **of Traian**" (Troian) from the left bank of Olt, in the straits of the Carpathians, upstream of Jiblea village. **Cesar Boliac** writes about it: "…upstream from **Cozia**, at the stone called the table of Traian, which is definitely a **Dacian altar**; of which one can see very often in the Carpathians – only from Sinaia over the mountain to the Cave, one can count three such altars" (Trompeta Carpatilor, nr. 939, 1871, p.2). I have seen it twice, but today can not be distinguished any more the primitive shape of this ancient altar].

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XIV. *KION OURANOU*. THE SKY COLUMN ON ATLAS MOUNTAIN IN THE COUNTRY OF THE HYPERBOREANS.

XIV. 1. The geographical position of Atlas Mountain according to the heroic legends.

Near the simulacrum of ***Zeus aigiochos*** from the highest peak of Bucegi Mountain (2508m), between Prahova district and the county of Brasov, rises a gigantic rock column, which dominates the entire south-eastern corner of the Carpathians, and near this column, two other rocky peaks, born from the womb of the earth in the shape of powerful monoliths, rise their tops into the sky. Exactly like the figure of ***Zeus aigiochos***, this column had in prehistoric antiquity a particular religious celebrity with all the Pelasgian tribes which had emigrated from the Carpathians towards Hellada, Asia Minor and Egypt.

This column was considered in the southern legends as the miraculous column of the earth, which supported the starry vault of the sky, or the northern pole of the universe.

We will examine firstly the old **Hellenic** traditions regarding the geographical position of this column and we will present then the legends and the important role which this column had in the ante-Homeric religious beliefs.

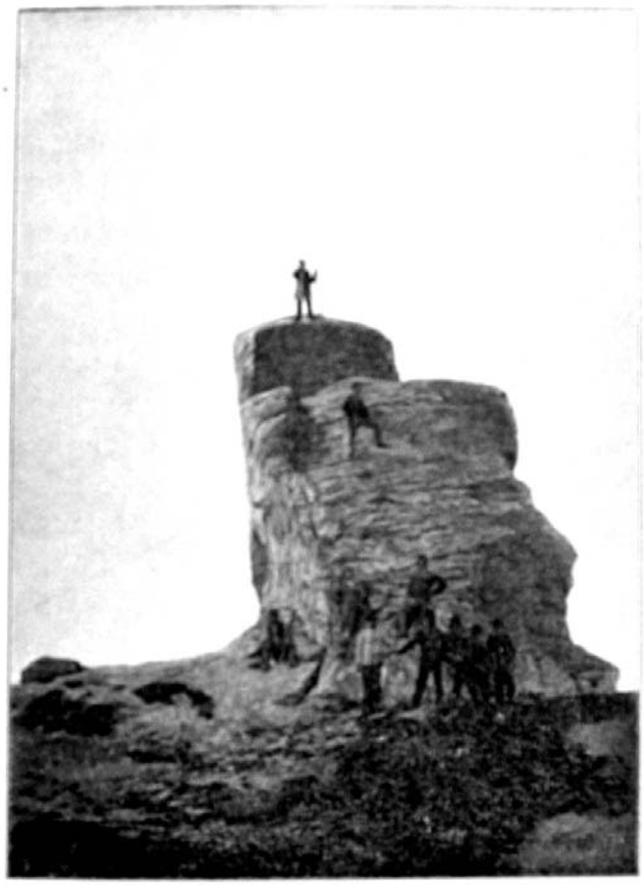
According to the old Greek geographical traditions, this legendary column of the sky was located in **the extreme parts**, or northern, of the known world, on the high and vast mountain called **Atlas**, in the country of the **Hyperboreans**.

This Atlas is one of the great figures of the Saturnian times.

As the old historical sources used by **Diodorus Siculus** said (lib. III. 57. 60), Atlas was Saturn's brother and both were the sons of Uranus and Gaea. The titan Atlas especially was a powerful and wealthy king who ruled over the people of the **Atlantes**, who were part of the big family of the Hyperboreans.

It was said about this Atlas that he had flocks of fine sheep, of a reddish golden color (Ibid,lib.IV.27). And the poet **Ovid** presents this shepherd king from the times of the theogony with the following words: ”Thousands of flocks and cattle herds wander on his plains. His country is not pressed on either side by his neighbors' boundaries. On his trees leaves grow glowing with gold, the branches of the trees are of gold and of gold also are the fruit that covers them” (Metam. lib. IV. v. 634 seqq).

This Atlas, brother of Saturn, had taken part in the Titans' war against Jove, from which cause, after the total victory of this new monarch, was condemned to one of the most difficult labors known in the legendary history of antiquity, namely to support the sky with his head and tireless arms (**Hesiod**, Theog. v. 517).



The **Sky Column** (***chion ouranou***) from ancient **Atlas**,
in the country of the Hyperboreans, today **Omul Peak**
in the south-eastern corner of the Carpathians.
View from E-NE
(From a 1899 photograph)

The grammarian **Apollodorus of Athens**, who had lived around 145bc, had written an important work about the traditions and legends of the heroic times, which he had extracted from the cyclic poets, the ancient logographers and historians. In this work of his, of a great value for the history of ante-Homeric times, we find the following geographical data regarding the region over which the titan Atlas had once ruled:

Eurystheus, the king of **Mycenae**, Apollodorus tells us, had asked **Hercules** to accomplish also an eleventh labor and to bring him **the golden apples** from the **Hesperides**. But these apples, writes Apollodorus, were not in Libya (or the lands of Africa), as some say, but at the **Atlas Mountain in the country of the Hyperboreans** (Bibl. Lib. II. 5. 11).

Jove, on the occasion of his wedding, had presented these apples to Juno, and they were guarded there by an immortal dragon, who had one hundred heads, born from the union of

Echidna and **Typhon**, and this dragon used many and different kinds of voices. Hercules, traveling across Libya, reached the External Sea, from there he crossed with his ship to the facing continent, and went to the Caucasus mountain, where he killed with his arrows the eagle (also born from **Echidna** and **Typhon**), who picked at **Prometheus**' liver. So he freed Prometheus from his chains, and Prometheus advised him that, once arrived at **Atlas, in the country of the Hyperboreans**, he was not to go in person for the apples, but to send Atlas to bring them, while he, Hercules, supported on his shoulders, in Atlas' stead, the pole of the sky (**Apollodorus**, II. 5. 11; **Cicero**, De nat. deor. II. 41) [1].

[1. The Greek writers had lost very early the exact knowledge about the geographical position of the **Atlas** mountain. Because of this, some placed it in **Mauritania** in Africa, others in **Italy**, and finally some in **Arcadia** in the Peloponnesus. But no other mountain with the name of **Atlas** ever existed in any part of the ancient world, except in the country of the **Hyperboreans**. To the indigenous populations of NW Africa the name Atlas was totally **unknown**. This name was given to that mountainous range only in the Greek literary writings (**Pliny**, V. 1.13; **Strabo**, XVI. 3. 2)].

Hercules obeyed Prometheus' advice, took the pole of the sky on his shoulders in Atlas' stead, and Atlas went to the gardens of the Hesperides, took three apples and returned to Hercules. (This scene is represented on a bas-relief from the temple of Jove at Olympia). But now Atlas did not want to take back on his shoulders the pole of the sky, saying that he himself will take to Eurystheus the apples, while Hercules will continue to support the sky in his place. Hercules promised firstly to do that, but using a ruse, taught him by Prometheus, he put again the sky on Atlas' shoulders. Namely, Hercules asked Atlas to support the sky for only a few moments, so that he could put a cushion on his head. Atlas put down the apples and took the sky, while Hercules grabbed the apples and went away.

This is the oldest tradition, and the most accredited at the same time, about the country of the titan Atlas, a king from the country of the pious Hyperboreans.

The **Hyperboreans**, the inhabitants of a very fertile and blessed country, a pastoral and agricultural people, full of virtues, religious and just, contemporary with the gods of Olympus, who considered themselves born from the glorious race of the titans (**Boeckhius**, Pindari opera,II.96), were an extended Pelasgian population living at the north of Istru and the Black Sea (**Pindar** affirmed that the Hyperboreans lived near the sources, or cataracts, of the Istru –Olymp.III.14-17).

Later though, Atlas, this powerful ruler of the people of the Atlantes, **was turned into a huge mountain**, continuing to support on his head the northern pole or the axis of the sky.

This legend is the following:

Perseus, the mythical hero from Argos, the son of Jove and the nymph Danae, was sent by king Polydectes from the island of Seriphos to bring him the head of **Gorgona Medusa**, which had the magic power to turn mortals into stone. Perseus arrived to the sources of **the river Okeanos** (the

cataracts of Istru), where the three legendary gorgons lived (**Apollodorus**, Bibl. II. 4.2.8; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 274. 281; **Preller**, Gr. Myth. II, 1854, p.44), cut Medusa's head, put it in his bag and went away. He stopped at king Atlas on his way back, in the country of the Hyperboreans, and asked for his hospitality for one night. But Atlas, remembering an old prediction that a son of Jove will steal his golden apples, told him harshly to be off immediately, as otherwise neither his false brave deeds, nor his father Jove, will protect him from his wrath.

Perseus took then out of the bag the ugly head of Medusa and Atlas, big as he was, was instantly transformed into a mountain, his head becoming the top of a high peak (**Ovid**, Metam. lib. IV. 627 seqq; **Pindar**, Pyth. X. 50), while his body an immense mountain range [2].

[2. A similar legend exists with the Romanian people: that the figure from "Omul" mountain represents a **shepherd** whom God punished for his lack of piety by **changing him into a strong rock** (**Muller**, Siebenburgische Sagen, p.174)].

The fundamental idea in Atlas' legends is that this shepherd-king of the ancient world supported with his head and arms the pole, or the **northern extremity of the axis** around which the sky vault rotates. And Atlas mountain is also located in the northern regions of Europe by **Ovid** (Metam. IV. 130-131), by **Hesiod** (Theog. v.518, 736) and by **Virgil** in his Aeneid, these last two works having been written on the basis of the geographical data of the sacred literature.

Mercury (Hermes), **Virgil** tells us, sent by Jove to Africa with order to Aeneas to leave without delay for Italy, flew over countries and seas, helped by his sandals' wings. "In this travel of his through the air, Hermes sees the cap and the precipitous slopes of hard **Atlas**, who supports the sky with his head. His head is crowned with fir trees and always surrounded by **black clouds**, beaten by **winds and rain**. His shoulders are covered by **masses of snow**, and rivers of water rush forth from the old one's face, while his terrible beard is **full of ice**" [3].

[3. In another poem of his (Georg. III. 349 seqq), **Virgil** also mentions near the Istru the **long shape** of the **Rhodope** mountains range (Carpathians), which arches back around **the central axis** of the sky.
St. Paulinus in his poem dedicated to the bishop Niceta from **Dacia** at 398ad, also considers that the Dacians lived under the northern pole].

So far we talked about Atlas as of one of the great personalities of the prehistoric times, as of a powerful king rich in flocks and wealthy in gold, from the country of the Hyperboreans; we also talked about Atlas as an important mountain from the same region, which represented, by name and legends, the ancient titan.

But in Greek antiquity, the name Atlas had another special **geographical** meaning.

With **Herodotus**, **Atlas** is the name of a **significant river**, which flows from the heights of old Hem (Carpathians) and into the Lower Istru (**Herodotus**, lib. IV. 49; **Gooss**, Studien zur Geographie d. Trajanischen Daciens, p.10; **Dio Cassius**, lib. LXVII. 6), identical with **Alutus fluvius** of the Romans and with the river **Olt** of today (Germ. Alt) [4].

[4. The name **Alutus** (Greek ***'Atlas***) presents itself as an old Pelasgian word, whose primitive meaning was without doubt "**washed gold**" and **the place** where **gold is washed** (Lat. **alluo**, to wash). From here derives also the legend that in Atlas' kingdom even the leaves on the trees were of gold. The term **alutatium**, with the meaning of gold found on the surface of the earth, was still used in the times of **Pliny** (H. N. XXXIII. 21. 2) by the gold miners who washed gold in Dalmatia.

The washing of gold from the sands of **Olt** was in use in the Romanian Country until almost 1848.
Tunusli says (Ist. politica si geografica a Terei romanesci, p.37): "**Gold** is extracted from the sand of the rivers **Olt**, Topolog, Arges and Dambovita, by the royal gypsies called **rudari**". **Sulzer** also speaks about the gold found in the river **Olt** (Geschichte d. transalp. Daciens I. 152-153)].

The name **Olt** had and still has with the Romanian people the same archaic meaning as both **mountain** and **river** at the same time. The important chain of the Southern Carpathians, which once harbored the pastoral Pelasgian tribes – starting from Barsa country to the sources of Motru – bears even today the name of **the mountains of Olt** and **the mountains of the Olteni** (**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.557; **Marienescu**, Carols, p.133) [5].

[5. In folk poems from Banat "the **Peak of Olt**" is the highest mountain towards Transylvania (**Hodos**, Folk poetry from Banat, p.127).
Fagaras mountains are also called in Transylvania the **mountains of Olt**. Apart from the river Olt, there are also in Romania three hills called **Olt**, in the districts Valcea and Dolj)]

Finally, the legendary history of Atlas presents also an archaeological character.
According to old Hellenic traditions, the highest peak of Atlas mountain showed the petrified figure of this powerful representative of the race of the titans.
"As great as Atlas was" writes **Ovid** (Metam. IV. v. 656 seqq) "he was changed into a mountain. His beard and locks now became forests, his shoulders and arms, extensive hills; what had before been his head, now is the top of the highest mountain; his bones became rocky crags; and then, growing in all directions, he reached an immense size".
Virgil also mentions Atlas' **head**, crowned with fir trees and surrounded by clouds, his **shoulders** covered by masses of snow, the **big face** of the old man from which rivers of water rush forth, and his terrible **beard** full of ice.

This colossal figure turned to stone, described with such realism by Atlas' legends, still exists today near the column which rises on the top of Omul mountain. It is the grandiose simulacrum of ***Zeus aigiochos***, formed by an entire mountain peak.
And the words of the Roman poet **Statius** (Thebaid. Lib. XII. V. 650) referred to the same figure, when he talked about **Jupiter nubilus** from the **axis of the Hyperboreans**.
These legends of Atlas belong to the second period of prehistory, when the old traditions about the holy places from the north of Istru had been lost in the southern regions, when the miraculous simulacrum of Saturn as ***Zeus euruopa aigiochos*** from the mountains of Olt was considered to be the titan Atlas, turned into stone. It is the same monument of the ante-Homeric times, but this time with different names and legends [6].

[6. This lack of geographical knowledge regarding the regions from the north of Istru is stated by **Herodotus**, in the following words: ”northwards from Thrace, what sort of people dwell, **nobody can precisely tell**. Only that it seems that **beyond the Istru** there is a deserted and infinite land].

We are presented now with the last geographical matter from the history of the legends of the titan Atlas, namely: which is the origin of the name “the **Sky Column**” of the colossal pyramid from the top of the **Omul** mountain.

With **Eschyl** (Prometheus, v. 349), this majestic monument of the Pelasgian world bears the name “**the column of the sky and earth**”.

And **Homer** mentions in his Odyssey (I. v. 53-54) “**the long columns**” on the Atlas mountain, “**which separate the sky from the earth**”, without saying anything though about their number. But **Hesiodus** tells us (Theog. v. 521-522) that Atlas supports the sky with his head and tireless arms, and this author also adds that Prometheus had been chained on the middle column.

So, according to the old legends of the Theogony, there were three stone columns on Atlas mountain, out of which one, the highest and strongest, was considered as the principal column. Three columns with particular shapes, which had once represented some sacred symbols, can still be seen on the highest peak of Omul mountain, dominating from above the figure of ***Zeus aigiochos*** (from the point of view of its geological formation, the peak called **Omul** was and still is considered as only one of the peaks of **Caraiman** mountain – **Frunzescu**, Dict. top. p. VI).

The name “**the Sky Column**” was doubtless in the beginning only an expression of the sacred geography. It designated not an imaginary miraculous column, which supported the starry vault of the sky, but a real, grandiose column, from the most sacred mountain of the ancient times, called in Greek literature ***Ouranos, megas ouranos***, today **Caraiman** (Cerus manus), column which had been consecrated to the supreme divinity of the sky.

According to traditions and the positive archaeological data which we have, the first religious monuments which humanity had erected in honor of the celestial divinities, were only simple wooden or stone columns.

So, the gigantic columns of Hercules, so famous once in the ancient world, were, as the scholiast of **Dionysius Periegetus** tells us (Fragm. Hist. gr., Ed. Didot, III. 640. 16), consecrated firstly to Saturn, the god who represented the great divinity of the immense sky.

And **Pausanias**, in The description of Greece, mentions that, on the road from Sparta to Arcadia there were seven columns, erected according to **the ancient rite**, about which it was said that represented the simulacra of the seven planets (lib. III. 20. 9).

Even in the second century b.c., the grammarian **Apollodorus of Athens** had established, based on older texts, that the majestic Atlas mountain which supported the northern pole of the sky, was

not in Libya or NW Africa, but in the country of the **Hyperboreans**, an extended Pelasgian population from north of Thrace or the Lower Istru.

The same truth is confirmed today by the names and geographical descriptions, as well as the monuments mentioned in the legends of Atlas.

According to all these different geographical indications of antiquity, the immense Atlas mountain, the **pastoral** mountain of the Hyperboreans, corresponds to the southern chain of the Carpathians, known in Romanian history under the name of the mountains of Olt.

Especially the apex of old Atlas presents itself as identical in everything with the majestic peak called Omul, from the Bucegi massif, that massif on which there are also the simulacrum of ***Zeus aigiochos***, the cyclopean altars, and the three columns of stone, about the legends of which we shall speak in the following chapters [7].

[7. As in antiquity the countless flocks of the titan **Atlas** had become famous for their golden fleece, similarly was renowned, to our very days, the race of sheep with **fine, short and curly fleece** from the mountains of **Fagaras** and **Barsa** (**Fridvalszky**, Mineralogia M. Pr. Transilvaniae, 1767, p.6). And also regarding the great flocks and herds which grazed once this group of mountains, **Babes** writes (Din plaiul Pelesului, p.58-63): "From prehistoric times, on the peaks of the mountains and the highest tops of the Carpathians, were brought to **pasture countless flocks of sheep, herds** of cattle and horses…There were shepherds who owned hundreds and even thousands of horses, others who had flocks of ten to twenty thousands of sheep…The predominant races of sheep in our country are **tsurcana** or barsana and **tsigaia**….**Tsigaia** sheep are of the type with **curly and fine fleece**; as for color, tsigaia is white, black, reddish or smoky". The religious songs from **Dobrogea** still mention these sheep: ewes with **yellowish fleece**, with **golden fleece**, with **silken fleece**.

The peaks of **Omul** are usually **covered in clouds and mists** today also, exactly as it was said about old Atlas; and under the cover of the rocks, **the snow is permanent** (Turcu, Escursiuni, p.20). **Atlas** was considered in the old legends as the highest mountain of the known world (**Ovid**, Met. VI. 115; **Virgil**, Aen. IV. 482).
The same was believed in the 18th century, that the mountains Clabucet, Piatra Craiului and Bucegi were the principal heights of the Dacian Carpathians (**Fridvalszky**, Mineralogia M. Principatus Transilvaniae, 1767, p.11)].

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XIV. 2. Prometheus chained on the Sky Column in Dacia.

On the principal column of Atlas mountain, the same mountain and the same column which dominate the whole SE corner of the Carpathians, was, according to the old legends of theogony, chained **Prometheus**, the most superior mind of the Pelasgian world.

Prometheus' legend presents one of the most sublime images of the nascent civilization of the Pelasgian people.

After Jove defeated old Saturn and took his place in all the divine and political honors, a grave misunderstanding took place, according to these legends, between the mortal men and the new autocrat. The representative of the discontented world was the wise **titan Prometheus**.

In one of the best tragedies of **Eschyl**, Prometheus, the father of civilization and the friend of mankind, inculpates **Jove** like this: that as soon as he ascended his father's throne, to rule over

gods and men, he gave all good things to gods only, without being concerned at all with the lot of the poor mortals, and even more, that Jove had wished to extinguish the whole human **genus** and create another, and that only himself, Prometheus, had opposed this plan (Prometheus vinctus, v. 228 seqq).

Jove had become powerful over gods and men through his reigning position, but Prometheus was powerful through his wisdom, superior by the force of his thinking, and he was supported by the humans. Great jealousy and quarrel issued because of this in the counsel of gods between Prometheus and Jove.

The first cause of the discord was, according to **Hesiod**, the following:

While the gods and the people had held a common assembly at **Mecone**, in order to decide the honors and duties reserved to each party, Prometheus fetched for sacrifice a big ox and proposed to divide it [1].

[1. ***Mechone***, an obscure locality. It was considered by some Greek authors as identical with **Sycion** or **Sicyon** in the Peloponnesus (**Strabo**, VII. 6l 25). But because the events of theogony and particularly the tragic episode of Prometheus happened at the north of Istru, or in Scythia, we must look for the ancient locality Mecone here. We note that two villages in Transylvania, situated close to “Omul” mountain have even today the name **Moeciu**].

He then slaughtered the victim and made two heaps. On one side he put all the meat with the good intestines and fat, which he covered with the skin of the ox. And on the other side he put only the bones, which he cunningly covered with white, shiny fat. In this way Prometheus wanted to trick Jove, to choose the leanest part for the gods. Although Jove had observed immediately the trickery, he intentionally chose the bad part in order to have a good reason to revenge himself on the mortals, as he already had no good intentions towards them. Since that time, says Hesiod, the custom was introduced to humans to burn only the bones on the altars of gods.

Now Jove, deeply angry that the gods had been shortchanged in their honors, forbade the use of fire to the humans. But Prometheus, with his titanic skills, stole from the eternal fire of Jove a few sparks, which he brought and presented to the mortals [2].

[2. **Hyginus** also tells this legend but with some more details (Poeticon astronomicon. II. 6).
According to what he says, the ancients used to sacrifice to gods in great ceremonies, in which they burned whole carcasses, and because of this waste the poor could not make sacrifices. **Prometheus** obtained from Jove the favor that the mortals might be allowed to burn but a part of the victims’ meat, leaving the rest for their personal use. Jove accepting, Prometheus killed two bulls, put the intestines on the altar, then, gathering together the rest of the meat from both victims, covered it with one of the skins, after which he put all the bones together, which he covered with the other skin. He then suggested to Jove to choose one part or the other for burning. Jove, who, although a god, could not see everything, chose the bones, believing that each part represented the remains of one bull. But seeing that he had been deceived, he **took the fire from the mortals**, so that they would have no use for the meat of the victims, being unable to boil it. But Prometheus, always inventive, thought how to give back to mankind the fire which it had lost because of him. So he went to the place where Jove’s fire was, took a few sparks, put them inside the plant called **ferula** and brought them to the mortals].

So, the great step towards the civilizing of the human genus had been made. The humans started to enjoy the benefits of the fire, this divine element. What had happened could not be undone. And Jove, seeing from afar how the flames of the fire burned on the hearths of the humans, burned with anger, and because he did not want his rival Prometheus to earn a higher consideration in the eyes of the mortals than the gods had, because of this gift, decided to punish him for this daring deed. He ordered Vulcan to chain him on the high and solitary stony peak of **Atlas** mountain from the ends of the earth, or from the country of the **Scythians**.

"**Atlas**", writes **Hesiod** (Theog. v. 517 seqq), "supports the vast sky **at the ends of the earth** with his head and tireless arms, being constrained to do this by a double necessity. This fate was decided for him by wise Jove, who tied and chained astute **Prometheus** with thick, unbreakable chains, **on the middle column.** And he sent against him a **vulture** with wide wings, who continuously picked at his liver, which was never wholly consumed, because it grew back overnight. **Hercules,** the brave son of Alcmene, the goddess with fine feet, killed this bird and freed Prometheus from his anguish".

From a historical point of view, Prometheus' legends present a special interest for the **origins of European civilization** at the north of Lower Istru, and for the progress of this civilization towards the southern regions.
According to **Hesiod**, **Prometheus was a brother of Atlas** and both of them sons of the titan **Iapet**, who lived at the borders of the known world together with **Saturn** (Ibid, Theog. v. 507, 509-510; **Homer**, Iliad, VIII, v. 479). According to Hesiod, the mother of Atlas and Prometheus had been a daughter of **Oceanos** (ancient Istru) named **Clymene**.
And the historian **Herodorus**, who lived before Herodotus, tells us that **Prometheus was a king of Scythia** (fragm. 23). Where great historical, religious or political events were concerned, the old Greek authors usually understood under this geographical name of Scythia the lands from the north of Istru, and from the NW corner of the Black Sea. Even with Herodotus, ancient Scythia stretched along the Lower Istru and ended in the regions of today Olt.

According to legends, Prometheus, the most genial figure of prehistoric world, gave man not only the benefit of fire, but a great many other good things, which **Eschyl** enumerates like this:
"Men", says Prometheus, "had in the beginning the mind of a child, and I made them wise and I gave them the power of thought. In the beginning the things which they saw, they saw in vain, and what they heard they did not hear. For a very long time they confused all things, as the phantoms of some dreams are confused. These men", continues Prometheus, "did not know how to build brick houses, exposed to sunlight; they did not know how to work the wood, but **dwelt in underground places**, as ants, hidden inside the dark womb of the caves; they had no sure sign,

either for the beginning of winter or of spring, or summer, when the fruit ripens, but lived without any sort of knowledge, until I taught them to know the rise and setting of the stars, which is a thing more difficult to remember; I invented the most useful sciences, the system of numbers, I found the way to combine letters, and how things can be memorized, this is the mother of all sciences. I first yoked the cattle, to be used for transport…and still I, and not another, discovered the sails so that the ships would be able to navigate on the sea…Moreover, when someone fell sick, had no cure, and no way to live, and men died for lack of remedies, until I first taught them how to make useful medicines, with which to protect themselves against all illnesses; I taught them different ways to prophesy…Finally, who could affirm to have discovered before me the things useful to mankind which are hidden under the earth, the copper, the iron, the silver and the gold, and, summarizing all this in a few words: know that **all the arts, the mortals have learnt from Prometheus**" (Prometheus vinctus, v. 443 seqq).

In antique legends Prometheus appears also as **the creator of a new human genus**. Prometheus, **Apollodorus** tells us, shaped men from water and earth and gave them the fire, which he'd stolen from Jove and which he'd brought to them hidden in the plant named ferula (Bibl. I. 7. 1; Ovid, Met. I. 81) [3].

[3. **Stephanus Byzanthinus** writes that at the time of **Deucalion**'s flood, after all mankind had perished and the earth had dried again, Jove ordered **Prometheus** and **Minerva** to form clay idols, then, calling all the winds, gave them souls and life].

We find a more complete version of this legend with the poet **Claudianus** (Eutropium, II. v. 470): According to what legends tell us, he says, two twin brothers, Iapet's sons, shaped from the same matter the first ancestors of our human genus, but with different success. **Prometheus** had put more divine spirit in the clay of the men created by him with a lot of care, and they, being created by a better master, knew in advance what was going to happen, so they were ready to meet the events which could harm them. But the second author of the human genus, whom the Greek poets name by right **Epimetheus** (mindless), being a lesser master, had chosen clay of an inferior quality and had not inspired any divine essence into it. These people, exactly like animals, could not avoid dangers, could not predict things and what was going to happen, and after they suffered a misfortune, only moaned and lamented.

It is impossible to know today the true historical meaning of this legend about the creation of man from water and clay. The origin of this belief harks back to very ancient times.

It is the same legend which had migrated from north to south, which had passed from the Carpathians to Hellada and from Hellada to Egypt, and which later was introduced by Moses in the holy books of the Hebrews. The times of Prometheus are much more ancient than the release

of the Jewish people from their slavery in Egypt; especially the northern legend about the creation of man from water and clay, is much more archaic than the final redaction of Moses' books.

Finally, we have another monument of an extreme archaeological importance, which attests that the chaining of Prometheus on the principal column of Atlas mountain refers to the gigantic column which dominates the whole SE corner of the Carpathians.

Near this majestic column on Omul Peak, rise their heads, as I mentioned above, two other rocks, or two archaic monoliths which once had certain religious functions.

One of these mysterious rocks presents a megalithic sculpture which represents the head, neck, chest, and part of the wings of a **gigantic vulture**, facing the principal column.

This monumental figure is the mythological vulture, to which the legends of antiquity had attributed the role of torturer of Prometheus. To this divine vulture, sent by powerful Jove against Prometheus, has been consecrated even from the most obscure antiquity, a constellation in the northern hemisphere, called by Greek authors ***aetos*** and in Roman literature **Aquila** (**Cicero**, De nat. deor. II. 44; **Columella**, R. R. II. 43), **Aquila Promethei**, **tortor Promethei** (**Dupuis**, Origine de tous les cultes. Tome VI. 467-8 and Atlas, pl. 9. 13). The position of this constellation is near another group of stars which have the name of Prometheus or Ingeniculus [4].

[4. Near the constellation of the Vulture, there is also the group of stars called **Serpentarius**. According to some authors of old, Serpentarius represented **Carnubutas, the king of the Getae**, who had killed Triptolemos (**Hyginus**, Poeticon astronomicon, Ed. Basileae, lib. II. p. 68).
The **arrow** with which **Hercules** had killed the vulture who devoured Prometheus' liver, was also put among constellations with the name of Sagitta.
According to another tradition (**Hyginus**, Poet. Astr. lib. II), this was the arrow with which **Apollo** had killed the **Cyclops** who had manufactured Jove's thunderbolts. Apollo had buried this arrow **on the mountain of the Hyperboreans**, but the winds had taken it back to him, together with the first fruit produced at that time. That's why the arrow had been put among the stars].

The figure of a gigantic stone vulture near the column on which wise Prometheus had suffered according to traditions, was known also to the ancient authors.

The grammarian **Hyginus**, in his Astronomical Poem (lib. II), communicates some of the legendary history of this famous vulture:

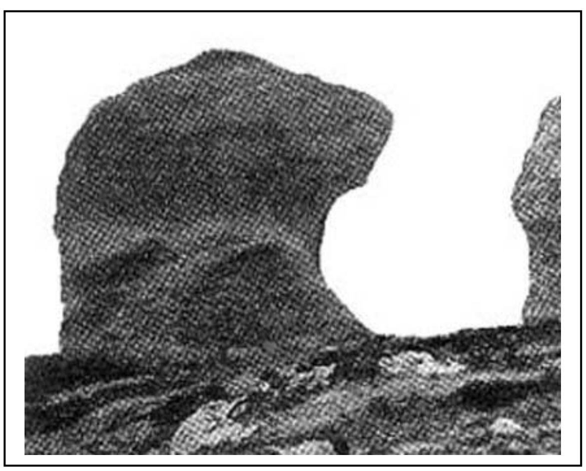
"Jove", says he, "sent the vulture against Prometheus, to devour his liver, which grew back each night. This vulture was born, according to some, from Typhon and Echidna, according to others, from Earth (Terra) and Tartaros. But most of authors insist that this vulture **was made by Vulcan**, and **Polyzeus** demonstrates that **it was made by Vulcan** and that Jove gave it life".

So we have before us a sculpture from the most obscure times of ante-Hellenic civilization, a religious emblem which was considered, according to traditions, as the handicraft of the most genial master of the ancient world, of Vulcan.

Although this archaic figure from the high peak of the Carpathians has been exposed for millennia to the harshest of elements, it awakens admiration even today for its extremely elegant shapes.
This sacred vulture of prehistoric times is not the only sculpture left to us from this divine artist. The colossal simulacrum of ***Zeus euruopa***, from the vicinity of this column, which is a masterpiece deserving eternal admiration, and which once dominated the religious sentiments of the whole world, attests the grandiose concept and the style of the same peerless master [5].

[5. Vulcan appears in old traditions not only as a celestial **metalworker**, who crafts the most exquisite metal objects, like Jove's scepter, Achilles' weapons, Hercules' shield, etc, but he is at the same time a divine master craftsman universal, a worker in clay, a sculptor (**Hesiod**, Op 60. 70) and an architect.
He builds on ancient Olympus the gods' palaces and the fine porticoes of gilded stone (Iliad, I. v. 607; XX. 11). According to **Homer**'s Iliad (XVIII. V. 402), **Vulcan** worked for nine years near the river Oceanos (Istru). And according to **Pausanias** (II. 31. 3), a son of Vulcan, who had invented the pipe, was named **Ardalus**].

When the poet Pindar tells us in one of his odes that **Vulcan** broke with his hatchet Jove's head, from which the goddess of wisdom **Minerva** emerged, he tells us through these verses only a part of the folk tradition, which was that Vulcan had been the master craftsman who had made the great sacred head of ***Zeus***, on which were inscribed the symbolic traces of Athena's creation.
Both these figures are monuments of national art of the northern Pelasgians.
Phidias belongs to the historic times, Vulcan to those prehistoric. Phidias belongs to Hellada, Vulcan to the region near Oceanos potamos, or Istru. Phidias is a famous imitator, Vulcan is a divine creator in his art.



The vulture of Prometheus.
Megalithic sculpture near the great **Column** from the **Omul Peak**, the work of **Vulcan**, according to ancient legends.
View from S-SW.
Height above ground level about 6.50m.
(From a 1900 photograph)

The primitive meaning of this megalithic vulture (aquila), "**born from the Earth**", as the ancients said, was without doubt completely different.
This figure, hieratically represented near the column consecrated to the Sky (Caelius), expressed in the beginning only a simple religious idea, it was only a sacred symbol of the divine majesty and power.

According to Pausanias, there was on Lycaeu mountain in Arcadia, from where the entire Peloponnesus could be seen, a grandiose earth altar in the shape of a tumulus, dedicated to ***Zeus Lychaios***, and on the eastern side of this altar rose two columns (***chiones***), on which stood two very ancient vultures.

Of all the species of vultures which today dominate the lofty peaks of the Carpathians, the finest and most remarkable for its violent character is the so-called **golden vulture**, or **cehleu** (caelius), meaning the vulture of the sky [6].

[6. This vulture is called in Transylvania **sorlita**, which is very significant. **Eratosthenes** says (Catasterismi, c. 30) that this vulture is the only bird that flies towards the **sun** (TN – **sore**), without being troubled by its rays. The vultures of Bucegi mountains are renowned for their big size and their daring (**Babes**, Din plaiul Pelesului, p.72)].

This is the same vulture that in the ancient religion had been consecrated to the supreme divinity of ***Zeus***, it is the aquila of ancient Olympus (Olympus aetherius), called in the poetic literature of antiquity ***chrisaietos*** (***aietos***), aquila fulva, fulvus Jovis ales (**Virgil**, Aen. XII. V. 247), Jovis ales de plaga aetheria (Ibid. I. v. 394), Nuntia fulva Jovis, miranda visa figura (**Cicero**, De Leg. I. 1. 2).

According to **Hesiod**'s theogony, chained Prometheus suffered on the famous column on Atlas mountain.

Apollodorus locates Atlas mountain in the country of the Hyperboreans.

And **Pindar** tells us that the Hyperboreans were the people who dwelt near the sources (cataracts) of Istru (Olymp. III. v. 14. 17).

Finally, the Latin poet **Martialis** tells us even clearer (Epigr. Lib. IX. 46) that **Prometheus' rocks** and **the fabulous mountain** (of Atlas) were in **Dacia**. In one of his finest epigrams dedicated to a Roman soldier who was going to Dacia, he says so: "Marceline, soldier, you go now to take on your shoulders **the northern sky of the Hyperboreans and the stars of the Getic pole**, which barely move. **Behold also the rocks of Prometheus. Behold that famous mountain of legends**. Soon you will see all these with your own eyes. When you will contemplate these rocks in which echo the great pains of the **ancient** man, you will say: Yes, he was even tougher than these tough rocks, and to these words you could still add that he, who could endure such torments, could in truth also form the human genus.

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XIV. 3. Prometheus nailed on the Caucasus mountain in Dacia.

The chaining and torture of Prometheus formed in antiquity the object of a significant number of poems, descriptions and explanations. The fact that this memorable scene from the history of ante-Homeric civilization took place on the territory of Dacia, gives us the task to also analyze from a geographical point of view, the second legend about Prometheus' suffering.

According to various Greek authors from a later time than the time of Hesiod, Prometheus was nailed on the **Caucasus mountain in Scythia**. So, the grammarian **Apollodorus** tells us:
"**Prometheus**, after shaping men from water and earth, secretly stole fire from Jove and hid it in the plant called ferula. But Jove sensing this, ordered Vulcan to nail his body on the **Caucasus mountain**. This mountain is in **Scythia**, where Prometheus stayed nailed for a number of years (Bibl. Lib. I. 7. 1).
We have here therefore a new question from the geography of antiquity: which is the Caucasus about which the second legend of Prometheus speaks?
This Caucasus of Scythia on which Prometheus was chained or nailed, was a geographical mystery even for the most distinguished authors of old. The Caucasus from Prometheus' legends was not at all identical with the range of mountains which stretches between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea.
One of the most distinguished and learned men of the 12th century, the bishop **Eustathius of Thessalonika**, tells us the following in the Commentaries written by him on Dionysius Periegetus: "But the ancient authors affirm that that **Caucasus**, on which according to legends Prometheus was crucified, does not figure on the geographical tables" (v. 663).

So we have here a very precious statement, made on the basis of old legends and geographical sources, that Prometheus' Caucasus was not the Caucasus of Asia, or from the eastern parts of the Black Sea. And regarding this, the epoch of Roman domination in the eastern parts of Europe elucidates it completely.
Once the sovereignty of the world passed into the hands of the Romans, the geographical knowledge started to make an immense progress. Each Roman expedition was at the same time also a geographical reconnaissance. And, in our case, as soon as the Roman legions reached the Istru, the SE region of the Carpathians appears in different historical and geographical monuments under the name of "**Caucasus**".

The first Roman general who reached the Danube was Marcus Livius Drus (**Florus**, lib. III. c. 5; **Mommsen**, Rom. Gesch. II. 173).
Shortly after that, the ex-consul Piso, following the same strong policy of punishing and weakening the barbarians by making military incursions in their lands, crossed, according to the historian **Florus** (lib. III. 5), the mountains of **Rhodope** and of **Caucasus**.
In the historical summary of Florus, under the name **Rhodope** was to be understood the entire complicated system of mountains of ancient Thrace, together with the Hem or today Balkans, as seventy or eighty years later the poet **Virgil** similarly called **Rhodope** not only the mountains of Thrace, but also the mountains of Scythia from the north of Istru (Georg. III. v. 351).

And Florus meant doubtlessly under the name of Caucasus, a mountain from the territory of ancient Scythia, or the southern range of Dacia's Carpathians.

This is also confirmed by a remarkable Roman inscription (in Koln museum) from the time of the emperor Trajan, where the **group of the Carpathians near the Olt river is called Caucasus**.

The text of this inscription, of great value for the geography of Dacia in ante-Roman times is:

"Matronis / Aufanib(us) / C(aius) / Jul(ius) / Mansue / tus M(iles) l(egionis) I.M(inerviae) / p(iae) f(idelis) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) fu(it) / **ad Alutum** / **flumen secus** / **mont(em) Caucasi**" (**Henzen**, nr. 5939; **Froehner**, La Colonne Trajane, I. p. 28, nr. 16).

Dacia's Carpathians appear also under the name Caucasus in various other historical and geographical descriptions.

In the 5th century ad, the Roman geographer **Julius Honorius** had composed, based on older sources, a small treaty on cosmography (Cosmographia, 28), in which he mentions two mountain ranges with the name of **Caucasus**, one on the territory of Europe close to the Hem mountain, which corresponds to the SE Carpathians of Dacia, the other on the territory of Asia, on the eastern part of the Black Sea. (Honorius mentions near the Caucasus of Europe, the mountain **Hypanis.** We note that a mountain near Olt, towards SE of Samboteni village, is called today the **Upanas Peak** – Charta Romaniei meridionale, 1864).

We find another precious geographical statement with **Jornandis**, the historian of the Getae, who was probably born in Mesia. **Caucasus**, writes he (De reb. Get. C. VII), starts at the Indian Sea, goes then into Syria, where, forming a round corner, turns towards north, stretches along the lands of Scythia, descends to the Pontos, then, gathering its heights, **touches also the courses of Istru**, at the point where the river divides and flows in two directions.

Finally, the Carpathians also appear under the name Caucasus in the oldest Russian chronicle, attributed to the monk **Nestor**, born around 1056ad. "In the northern part of **Pontos**", he writes, "there are the Danube, Nistru (Dnestr), and **Caucasus mountains, or the Hungarian mountains**" (**Schlozer**, Russische Annalen. II. Gottingen, 1802, c. II, p.22).

Prometheus' Caucasus, or the legendary Caucasus of Scythia, is therefore from the point of view of prehistoric geography, one and the same with the southern range of the Carpathians, called by Apollodorus Atlas from the country of the Hyperboreans, and in the inscription from Koln, Caucasus by the river Olt (Alutum flumen) [1].

[1. **Hasdeu** says in Istoria critica, p.285: "It is therefore a fact mentioned by seven undeniable sources, plus Ovid's and Strabo's, which makes them nine, that the **Carpathians** were named **Caucasus**, beginning with the most remote time, until the Middle Ages"].

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XIV. 4. Prometheus chained on the rocks of Pharanx (Parang) mountain in Dacia.

According to **Eschyl** of Greece, born in the 6^{th} century bc, Prometheus, the most powerful genius of the Pelasgian times, was chained in **Scythia**, in **the country of the iron** (Prometheus vinctus, v. 2), on the remote territory of the ancient world (**Herodotus**, lib. V. 9), in a wild mountainous region, on some rocky crags, which in his poem are called ***pharagga, pharaggos*** and ***pharaggi***, various forms of the nominative ***pharagxi*** (**Eschyl**, Prometheus, v. 15. 142. 618. 1015), meaning mountain or rocky cliff with broken faces and deep ravines.

From the constant use which Eschyl makes in his tragedy of the term Pharang- in order to indicate the rocks and mountain on which Prometheus was crucified, results that we have in this case not a generic word, but a particular **topical** name.

Close to this mountain called Pharang-, on which according to **Eschyl**'s legend, had taken place Prometheus' torture, flowed, according to the same author, the great and divine river of the ancient world called **Oceanos potamos** or the Istru of historical times (Ibid. v. 284-285).

And in regard to the particular geographical position of this Pharang-, the itinerary proposed by Prometheus to the nymph **Io** presents a special importance.

The young priestess Io, daughter of king Inachus of Argos, persecuted by Juno because she was loved by Jove, comes on Pharang- to the crucified Prometheus, who was also the first prophet of his times, to learn how much more she will have to suffer and wander because of the persecution of the powerful queen goddess.

Prometheus indicates to the girl the following itinerary:

"Firstly", says he to Io, "taking the road from here towards **east**, you will cross **untilled fields** and will come to the **shepherd Scythians** (nomads), superb men, armed with far reaching arrows, who spend their lives in carts well fitted with iron, and well covered. But I counsel you not approach them, but instead to turn towards the rocks beaten by the waves of the sea, and to continue your way on dry land. On the left dwell the **Chalybi**, **the ironsmiths**, of whom you should beware, they are violent men and do not gladly receive strangers; from there you will reach **the violent river** called rightfully that, but don't cross it, because it is dangerous, until you reach the **Caucasus**, the highest mountain, where the torrents gather, rushing from the tops of this mountain, from where then the river takes their violence downstream. From there then, passing over the peaks of the mountain which reaches to the stars, take the road southwards and you will arrive to the land of the many **Amazons**, who hate men…They will show you the way with goodwill, then you will come to the **Cimmerian isthmus**, near the narrow mouths of the **Meotic lake**. After you will leave this isthmus, gathering your courage, you will have to cross the mouths of the Meotic lake, and you will achieve an everlasting fame for this crossing. After this

deed, the straits of the Meotic lake will be called **Bospor**, then, leaving behind the lands of **Europe**, you will cross into the continent of **Asia**" (Prometheus, v. 707 seqq).

It results from this new legend communicated by **Eschyl** that the rocky cliffs on which the great hero of the ante-Homeric civilization was put in irons, were on the western side of the Black Sea, on the territory of mountainous Scythia, near ancient Oceanos potamos. It also results from this legend that the tragic scene of Prometheus had taken place on the same mountain chain which is called by Hesiod **Atlas**, and by Apollodorus **Caucasus**.

The only difference is that the prehistoric Golgotha is presented by Eschyl as having been another group of mountains, **Parang**, the grandiose massif on the western side of the river Olt, famous for the wildness of its rocky cliffs and its solitary valleys.

In Eschyl's legends the **shepherd Scythians**, superb men and well armed, are the famous **Hyperborean shepherds**, who had once trodden the whole known world, and who dominated the mountains and the untilled fields on the northern parts of Istru.

Close to Pharang- mountain were the renowned **Chalybi** (Ibid, v. 715), the ironsmiths of prehistoric times. By form and meaning, this word is of Pelasgian origin, synonymous with the German **Huttenarbeiter**, workers in metal factories. But the original meaning of the word ***Chalibes*** was undoubtedly the same as the Romanian **Colibasi**, dwellers in huts (TN– **colibe**)[1].

[1. Various villages on the territory of Romania, in the districts Mehedinti, Gorj, Muscel, Dambovita and Ramnicul-sarat, have the name of **Colibasi**.
Eschyl says in another tragedy of his (Septem adversus Thebas, v. 729) that the Chalybi were people who had migrated from Scythia to the southern lands].

A locality at the foot of Parang mountain is called even today **Baia-de-fer** (TN – **Iron Mine**), but we don't know at what time the iron foundry had started there, flourished and ended.

All we know today are, according to our geographical descriptions, the almost vanished traces of an ancient factory (Marele Dict. Geogr. Rom., Baia de fer).

The mountains of Parang were once renowned for their wealth in metals.

The region of the Carpathian Mountains was in prehistoric times the classical country of mines, and it is a very remarkable fact from a historical point of view, that **Eschyl** (Prometheus v. 301-402) calls the western part of the Black Sea "**Mama ferului**" (TN – **Mother of the iron**).

Between the mountain Pharang- and the Black Sea, Eschyl also mentions a significant river which flows from the mountains, and famous for the violence of its course (Ibid, v. 717).

Of all the rivers of the Carpathians which flow into the Lower Danube, the most dangerous in Romanian traditions is the **Olt**. It is the "savage" river, the "accursed" river, with violent whirlpools. When it rains in the mountains, it comes swollen, muddy, angry and bloodied, it brings uprooted trees, bodies of outlaws and halters of dark bays (**Alecsandri**, Folk poetry, p.159 and Doinele, XLIX. LIV; **Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p. 320, 323; **Mandrescu**, Literatura, p.119).

Each day, say folk legends, at least one man must drown in the Olt and, when a day goes without the river receiving its sacrifice, it starts howling and men should avoid entering it, because it asks for a man's head (Sezatoarea, An. III. p.101).
Until the times of the reign of prince Bibescu, **Margot** writes (O viatorie, Buc, 1859, p.56), it was still believed that it was impossible to build a bridge over this river, even at Slatina.

In Eschyl's geography the mountain called **Caucasus** appears also near this violent river (Prometheus, v. 719), but not the Asian Caucasus, but the Caucasus from the western side of the Black Sea. It is the same mountain about which also talks the Roman inscription from Brambach: Ad **Alutum** flumen secus montem **Caucasi** (see above).
After Caucasus, the most important point from the western side of the Black Sea was, in **Eschyl**'s geography, the mountain whose peaks reach **to the stars** (Ibid, 721). It is the ancient **Atlas** of the Hyperboreans, about which **Virgil** says that it bears on its shoulders the axis, especially made to support **the flaming stars** (Aen, IV. v. 4820.
"And after passing over the peaks of the mountain that reaches to the stars", says Prometheus to the nymph Io, "…you will arrive to the land of the many **Amazons**".
These Amazons belonged to the barbarian lands. Homer mentions them only as an ancient tradition. Their country of origin was **Scythia**, especially Scythia from near the Lower Danube.
According to the traditions collected by the Roman historian **Trog Pompeius**, the Amazons boasted that they were" **the daughters of the god Mars**" and that they "**were from the nation of the Scythians**" (**Justinis**, lib. II. c. 4). **Virgil** (Aen. XI. v. 659-660) gives the Amazons also the geographical epithet of **Threiciae**, and according to **Hecateus** (Fragm. 352) they spoke the **Thracian** language, meaning Getic (**Valerius Flaccus**, Argon. IV. 602).
Apart from Mars, the Geto -Thracian divinity, the Amazons especially worshipped the goddess **Diana**, whose principal residence according to **Pindar** (Olymp. III. v. 27), was in **Istria**, near the mouths of the Danube.
On old monuments of Greek art, bas-reliefs, statues and vase paintings, they are armed with shields, bows and the war hatchet. They wear a helmet on their head, or a Dacian type cap (**Jahn**, Berichte d. sachs. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften. Phil.-Hist. Cl. I. 1850).
Finally, their physiognomy presents a national Pelasgian character.
Prometheus' Pharang- appears therefore as a mountain from the western parts of the river Olt. By name, position and description, it entirely corresponds to the mountain **Parang** of today [2].

[2. Parang mountain is especially characterized by giant precipices, collapsed cliffs and waves formed of gigantic boulders. Under the peak called **Carja** (2520m), two spikes rise from these ruins of rocks, like some inform columns, each ten meters high.
Eschyl also mentions (v. 142) some craggy rocks, ***schopeloi,*** on Pharanx mountain].

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XIV. 5. The Sky Column from the Carpathians, as sacred emblem of the acropolis of Mycenae.

The Sky Column from the south-eastern corner of the Carpathians, which even today hides its top into the clouds, had in the most remote times of prehistory, and still has partly today, the shape of a stunted, four angled pyramid.

Each face of this column represented then the shape of a trapeze and each face has once been decorated with certain figures, some of which can be made out even today, although only just, and about which we shall speak in the next chapters.

The dimensions of this column, as we ourselves have measured it in 1900 when we climbed the peak of Bucegi in order to study from a historical point of view this important monument of ancient world, are: height = 9.99m and base width of the longer sides =10.72m. (The SE and NW sides are wider, the SW and NE narrower).

This column has been considered in ante-Homeric times as the most sacred religious symbol of the entire Pelasgian world. It was represented with the same shape on the religious monuments of Hellada and Egypt, in the statuary art of the Romans, as well as on various specimens of ceramic paintings of the Greek and Etruscan epochs.

The oldest reproduction of this column is found on the cyclopean walls which encircled once the famous acropolis of Mycenae in the Peloponnesus.

The southern part of Hellada, called Peloponnesus, had once been Pelasgian par excellence.

Its oldest name had been **Pelasgia** (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. V. 2. 4).

One of the most important provinces of the Peloponnesus in antiquity has been **Argos**, a vast plain which stretched on the eastern side of this peninsula, between the mountains of Arcadia and the Aegean Sea. According to legends, the oldest inhabitants of Argos had been **Pelasgians** (Ibid. lib. V. 2. 4). Because the plains of this province were swampy in ancient times and were of little use for the sheep economy, the Pelasgians settled here were especially employed with keeping and rearing horses. **Homer** calls Argos the region where “horses are bred” (Iliad, II. 287; III. v. 75 and XV. v. 30).

There existed in Argos in the beginning two states and two principal cities as regal residences, **Argos** and **Mycenae** (**Strabo**, Geogr. lib. II. c. 6. 10). Later though, the hegemony over Argos and the entire of the Peloponnesus was taken over by Mycenae, which under the reign of the **Pelopides** had attained a bigger power and development.

During the times of the Trojan War, king in Mycenae was Agamemnon and his power extended over all of Greece (**Pausanias**, lib. VIII. 33. 2).

Homer calls Mycenae “a beautifully built city” (Iliad, II. v. 569), “city with wide streets” (Ibid, IV. v. 52), “**Mycenae rich in gold**” (Ibid, VII. v. 180 and XI. v. 46) and attributes the same epithet of “rich in gold” to its inhabitants.
The acropolis of Mycenae was situated on a high rocky outcrop in the shape of an irregular triangle (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p.80). This citadel was surrounded by cyclopean walls (**Pausanias**, lib. II. 16. 5 seqq), some of which still subsist today, 10.50m high, and 4.80m wide (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p.81).
On the south-western side of the citadel was the lower city of Mycenae, also surrounded with walls, but less significant, although on the site of this city a number of edifices built in cyclopean style still exist (Ibid, p.92, 94), the most monumental being the underground so-called “**Treasure of Atreus**”.
These impressive buildings tell us that Mycenae had once harbored an immense population, disciplined and opulent.

Euripides calls Mycenae “**Handicraft of the Cyclopes**” (Iphigenia in Aul. v.1500-1501), “**Fortress of the Cyclopes**” (Ibid, Herc. Fur. v. 15), “**Cyclopean Mycenae**” (Ibid, Iphig. Aul. v. 265), and “**cyclopean walls of stone**” (Ibid, Electra, v. 1159).
He calls the Peloponnesus “**Pelasgia**, my country” (Ibid, Iph. Aul. v. 1498-1499) and mentions the “beloved women of Mycenae who occupy first place on the chairs of the **Pelasgians** of Argos (Ibid, Orestes, v. 1246-1247).

The first settling of the Pelasgians in Mycenae took place during the Neolithic epoch.

The material and moral culture of these Pelasgians during the Neolithic epoch presents from every point of view the same ethnic character, the same evolution in the way of industry and art, as the civilization of the Pelasgians from the north of Thrace, especially from Dacia.
The stone implements, chisels and arrows (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p. 144. 181. 354; **Perrot**, Grece primitive, p. 116. 119. 127) of these southern Pelasgians, discovered under the ruins of their cyclopean edifices, their archaic pottery, its ornamentation (Ibid. Mycenes, p. 107. 127. 130. 167. 191. 192. 243) and their clay idols (Ibid, Mycenes, p.61. 137; **Tocilescu**, Dacia, p.877), present the same types and the same northern conception of art and industry as do those found on the territory of Dacia.
There is only one difference: the technique of the clay vases of Mycenae and Tirynth is inferior to that of Dacia.
The Pelasgians of the cyclopean times of Mycenae belong in everything to the same family, to the same civilization of the Pelasgians from the regions of the Carpathians [1].

[1. The great divinities of the inhabitants of Argos were those of the Dacians: **Jupiter Optimus Maximus** (**Livy**, 1. XXXIV. 24) or ***Zeus pater***, and **Apollo** (Iliad, II. 371, IV. 288).

As for the **physical type** of the aristocracy of Mycenae, judging by the gold masks discovered in the graves of the acropolis (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p.300, 371 and 418), it appears as a powerful and serious race, endowed with great intelligence, with an enterprising and domineering spirit; it is a type which in its characteristic traits is entirely different from the Greek figures from historical times].

During the times of the Trojan War, or in other words the prehistoric epoch of the metals, an entirely particular civilization begins and flourishes in the lands which constitute the eastern basin of the Mediterranean, a culture which by its origin and development is totally different from the civilizations of Assyria, Egypt and even of the post-Homeric epoch.

The monuments of this civilization are especially represented in the ruins of Mycenae, the city rich in gold; and this new phase in the history of the progress of humankind, which has been unknown up to our times, has received the name of **Mycenaean civilization**.

“The state”, writes **Perrot**, “the capital of which was Mycenae, seems to have been the most powerful constituted state in continental Greece during the first four or five centuries before the Dorian invasion. This is attested in the poem by the rank given to Agamemnon as leader of the alliance against Troy. The ruins of the enclosure and of the buildings of Mycenae are the most important of all those attributed to the heroic epoch in Hellada. At no other site the digs have brought to light so many riches from this remote epoch, and have given us such a good idea about the development of the art and industry, as those of Mycenae. Of all the discoveries made in the last 30 years, discoveries which reveal a long forgotten world, much older than the Greece of Homer, none were to have such an echo as the discoveries made at the acropolis of Mycenae. These discoveries offered us the means to be able to define this civilization, to distinguish it from the civilization of Egypt and Asia, **from which does not derive**, and from the Greek civilization proper, for which forms only a preface ….” (Grece primitive, p.133, 134; **Reinach**, L’origine des Aryens, p.113).

The national origin of the Pelasgians of the Peloponnesus and especially of those from Mycenae, had been in the lands from the north of Istru, not only because of their occupations and the character of their civilization, but also by their historical traditions and religious beliefs.

Between Argos and Mycenae and the countries from the north of Istru had existed continuous family and religious connections from the most ancient of times.

Pelasg, the legendary king of Argos, had been born, as the poet Asius who has lived around 700bc writes, “**on the high mountains, from the black Earth**” (**Pausanias**, lib. VIII. 1. 4).

Pelops, the founder of the dynasty of Mycenae, was a nephew of **Atlas**, the titan from the country of the Hyperboreans (**Hyginus**, fab. 83).

Eurystheus, the king of Mycenae, sent Hercules, the great hero of ancient times, to bring him the sacred golden apples from the country of the **Hyperboreans**. He also sent Hercules to **Istria**, after the sacred deer with the golden horns (**Pindar**, Olymp. III. v. 27). And we can suppose that Eurystheus sent Hercules to those same lands for the girdle of **Hippolyta**, the queen of the Amazons, given her by Mars.

This powerful king of Mycenae therefore, considered himself probably on the basis of an ancient genealogy, as having some right to certain sacred things from the north of the Lower Danube.

Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, chased by the Furies for having killed his mother Clitemnestra, came to purify himself and recover his health to the sacred altar from Scythia (**Lucanis**, Phars. VII. v. 776) [2].

[2. Ancient traditions tell us that **Orestes**, after being freed from the Furies, ran to **Macedonia** and died in **Arcadia**, in the locality called after him **Orestion**, or **Orestis** and **Orestias** (Frag. Hist. graec. IV. 510. 10; **Strabo**, XIII. 1. 3).
We have to note that under the name of "Arcadia" often figures at the antique authors a territory from the north of the Lower Danube. We find this geographical confusion also in the legends of Atlas, which according to some was a mountain in Arcadia (**Apollod**. III. 10. 1; **Dionys. Hal**. I. 61).
It is probable that the legend about the death of Orestes in Orestion of Arcadia referred in the beginning to the town **Orestia** from **Ardel** (Transilvania).
Aeneas, leaving Troy, went from **Thrace** to **Arcadia** (**Dionys**. I. 49), but certainly not to Arcadia in the Peloponnesus, allied with the other princes of Hellada against the Trojans].

The young priestess **Io**, persecuted by the caste of the priests of Argos, takes refuge in the mountains from the north of Istru, from there she goes to the Amazons, then to the Pelasgians of Scythia, then to those of Asia, and from there to her people in Egypt.

Menelaus, the king of Sparta, younger brother of Agamemnon, retires in his old age to the sacred ancestral places at the north of Istru. "Your fate", Proteus says towards Menelaus, "is to die not in Argos, where the horses graze, but the immortal gods will send you to **the plain of Elysium at the ends of the earth**….where the people lead an easy life, where there is neither snow, nor winter, nor much rain, and where the Ocean (Istru) always sends its gentle zephyrs to reanimate the people" (**Homer**, Odyss. IV. 561 seqq).

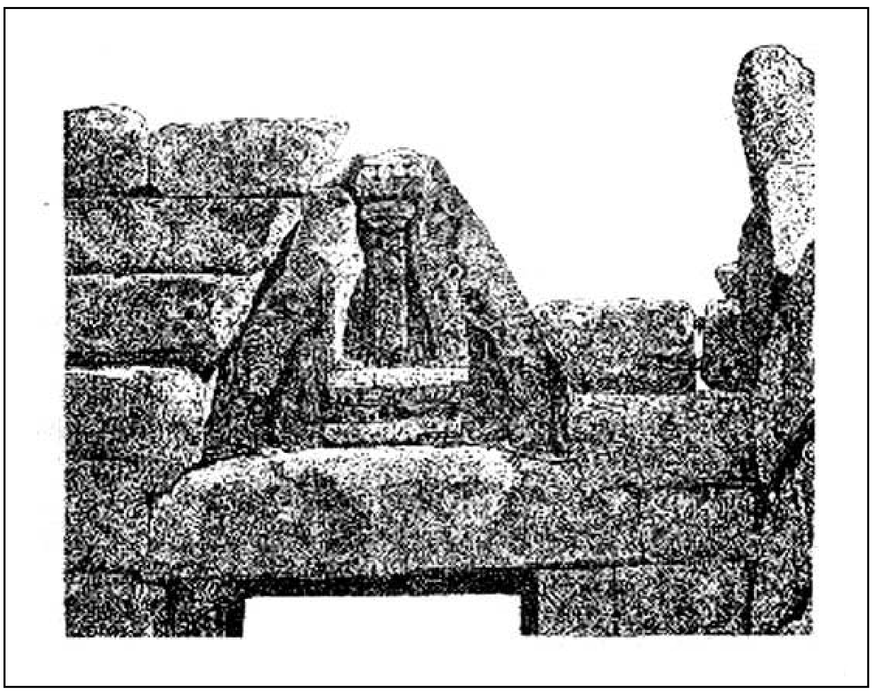
Finally, **Helen**, the beautiful heroine of the Trojan times, appears retired, after the death of Menelaus, near the temple in **Leuce** island from the mouths of the Danube, married with Achilles, as the legends say (**Pausanias**, lib. III. 19. 12. 13).

En engraving on an Etruscan mirror shows **Helen** dressed in a rich Pelasgian costume, sitting on a throne and stretching her hand towards **Agamemnon**, whom she receives in her kingdom in Leuce island. Between these two persons is figured **Menelaus** as a young man, holding in his right hand a phial, and in his left hand a lance (**Duruy**, Hist. d. Gr. I. p. 152).

In the traditions of the Pelasgians of the Peloponnesus, the places from the north of Istru, from the country of the pious and blessed Hyperboreans, were considered as the original lands of their sacred history, as the country of residence of their protective divinities, venerated at the same time for its riches.

A special interest for the origin of the Pelasgians of Argos and the evolution of the Mycenaean civilization is presented by the **religious emblem** which decorates the cyclopean walls of Mycenae.

Above the main gate of the acropolis of Mycenae, a huge basalt slab in the shape of a trapeze, 3.00m high and 0.60m thick, is enclosed in its cyclopean walls (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p.87).
It is a sort of bas-relief on which three altars are represented on the lower part, two at the front and one at the back, but from this latter only part of the pedestal is visible (Schliemann, preoccupied more with his findings than with archaeological research has believed that on this bas-relief only one altar had been represented). A Doric column rises from the big altar at the back and on each side of it a lion is figured, facing outwards, with the front legs propped on the slabs topping the altars. (The artist wanted to indicate by these three top slabs the number of the altars, which also seem to have been placed in the shape of a triangle, two small ones at the front and a big one at the back, on the right, like the real three cyclopean altars cut in live rocks are).



The emblem of Mycenae.
The bas-relief which decorates the main gate of the acropolis.
*(After **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs. I. p. 59)*

We are here in front of a monument of religious sculpture ante-dating the epoch of Homer.

Various archaeologists have tried to interpret the obscure meaning of this monumental sculpture masterpiece, but so far no satisfying conclusion founded on positive data, and corresponding at least in part with the original idea, has been reached.



The emblem of Mycenae.

*(After **Perrot et Chipiez**, Grece primitive. Pl. XIV)*

“It is considered generally”, writes **Schliemann** (Mycenes, p.87), “that this figure has a symbolic meaning. But which is this meaning? Various conjectures have been made: some believe that the column alludes to the cult by which the Persians worshipped the sun; others see in this column a symbol of the sacred fire, and finally, some think that it represents Apollo Agyieus, the guardian of the gates. I share this latter opinion”.

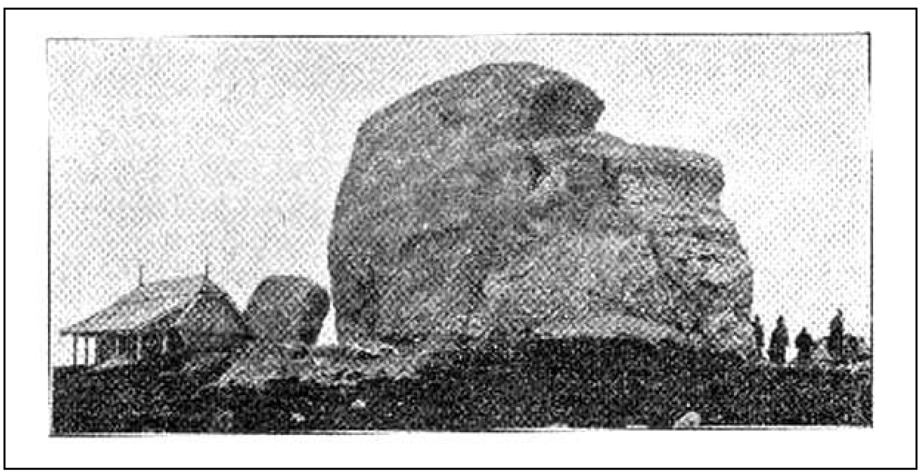
Perrot, another distinguished modern archaeologist confesses that the difficulties start with the interpretation of certain details of this emblem. Finally, he reckons that this column is only a

representation in miniature of the palace of the kings of Mycenae, that palace which once crowned the top of the rock on which was built the acropolis of Mycenae (Grece primitive, p. 800-801. 875).

All these are simple suppositions, which can not be supported either by texts, or by some analogous archaeological finding. All the archaeologists who studied the ante-Homeric civilization generally admit that the sacred emblem from the cyclopean walls of Mycenae represented something exotic in the lands of Hellada.

When we wish to interpret the narrative meaning of the monumental bas-relief we are met with this first matter: why the artist of Mycenae has figured this slab in the shape of a trapeze, and this point has been missed by all the archaeologists.

The artist of Mycenae has shaped this slab as a stunted pyramid, or as a trapeze, not because he lacked a suitable stone, but because this was a hieratical necessity. His intention was not to execute an original work, in which to use his imagination, but to reproduce as faithfully as possible the shape of a real sacred figure. Even the relative huge proportions which the artist gave to the stone slab and the figures represented on it, show that he was imitating a prototype.



The main Column on Omul Peak (Carpathians)
View from SE
(After a photograph from 1900)

Whoever contemplated from close, or even from afar, the grandiose shape of the column which rises on Omul Peak, cannot but be surprised by the great similarity between the outside shape of this column and the trapeze-slab which decorates the cyclopean walls of Mycenae.

Our eyes are first attracted by two lines almost parallel which start from the base, near the ground level, continue upwards, and above these lines can be observed two horizontal lines in the shape

of a capital. We can suppose therefore that this bas-relief almost effaced from the column of the Carpathians, had once represented the shape of a gigantic Doric column.

Other ancient marks can also be seen on the left side of the column.
On the lower part there is the figure of an altar, represented in the same style as on the Mycenaean slab, and above it a few black points, and under these points some curved lines rising upwards, with the appearance of a figure which once had represented the head of a man or an animal, looking outwards.



The Sky Column on Omul Peak in the Carpathians.

S-SW face, on which can still be recognized marks almost effaced of a **bas-relief** representing a **Doric column**, **an altar**, and above it a **human head** with long hair. (TN – or possibly the head of a lion and a human head). On the left is the vulture of **Prometheus**. *(After a photograph from 1899).*

We have talked so far about the resemblance between these two monuments from the point of view of the lines which form the outside contour, as well as from the point of view of the figures.

We have now to find out how the ancients interpreted this cyclopean emblem of Mycenae.

Euripides, who treated especially the prehistoric legends and ethnography of Argos, calls the acropolis of Mycenae **celestial cyclopean stone walls** (Troades, v. 1088); and in another place **cyclopean and celestial walls** (Ibid. Electra, v. 1138). He also calls Mycenae **the Cyclops' altars** (Ibid. Iphig. Aul. v. 152). These expressions of celestial walls and cyclopean altars used by Euripides to designate Mycenae, are without doubt only an allusion to the emblem which characterized the Pelasgian walls of the acropolis [3].

[3. Above the column represented on the relief of Mycenae can also be observed a **representation of the walls of prehistoric citadels**, formed by two horizontal slabs and four transverse beams (**Perrot et Chipiez**, Grece primitive, p.479; **Froehner**, La Colonne Trajane, Pl. 147-149).
The artist had wanted to express by this composition that the sacred sky column was in charge of supporting the walls of the acropolis of Mycenae].

We have therefore a positive text, coming from one of the most competent authors, relating to the traditions of Mycenae, text which makes it clear that the slab-trapeze, which was part of its gigantic walls, did not represent Apollo Agyieus, or the sacred fire of the Persians, or the palace of the Atreides, but the **Uranic column** or the **Sky column** from ancient Atlas in the country of the Hyperboreans, and at the same time the **cyclopean altars** of the Olympian gods, which were in fact on the same mountain, not far from the figure of ***Zeus aigiochos***.
Or, in other words, those who have built the cyclopean walls of Mycenae wanted to represent in this emblem the most sacred ancestral symbols, the Sky column and the cyclopean altars from the ancient country of the dynasty of Mycenae and of its inhabitants.

The relief of Mycenae represented in the first place a religious symbol. The walls of the Pelasgian cities and citadels had always been considered as sacred.

The religious character of this emblem is also confirmed by some glyptic specimens from the Mycenaean epoch.
One of these engraved stones, discovered in one of the oldest graves of Mycenae, shows a column in the middle and two altars in front of it, one bigger than the other. There are two griffons figured on it instead of the two lions, tied with gold threads to the column consecrated to the sky, and propped with their front legs on the bigger altar at the back.
The country of the griffons was, according to ancient legends, the country of the Hyperboreans. They guarded the gold of the Arimaspians, and on the occasions of his great feasts Apollo the Hyperborean traveled to the southern countries astride a griffon, which meant that the mother country was also sending gifts of gold to the sanctuaries of Hellada.

According to **Euripides**, **the rock which stood on ancient Olympus** between the sky and the earth, was tied all around with **gold chains**. This was of course an allegorical expression. It designated the mountains rich in gold which surrounded this column.



Engraving representing the **Sky column**, the **cyclopean altars** and the **Hyperborean griffons** (Mycenae).

*(**Perrot et Chipiez**, Grece primitive, p.801)*

On two other engraved stones discovered, one in Crete, the other in Mycenae, the middle column has disappeared.

One of the specimens shows two altars, one larger than the other, and above these altars a star with twelve rays, symbol of consecration, by which the artist wanted to express that here were represented the cyclopean altars of the Olympian gods, altars which had been placed among constellations. On this engraved stone the heads of the lions, exactly like those of the griffons, are turned backwards. It is an unnatural representation, certainly executed as such only in order to put even more in evidence the mystical shape of the trapeze, consecrated by a certain tradition, and which represented the sky column [4].



Stone engraved in Mycenaean style, representing the **cyclopean altars** (Crete)



Engraved stone, Mycenae.

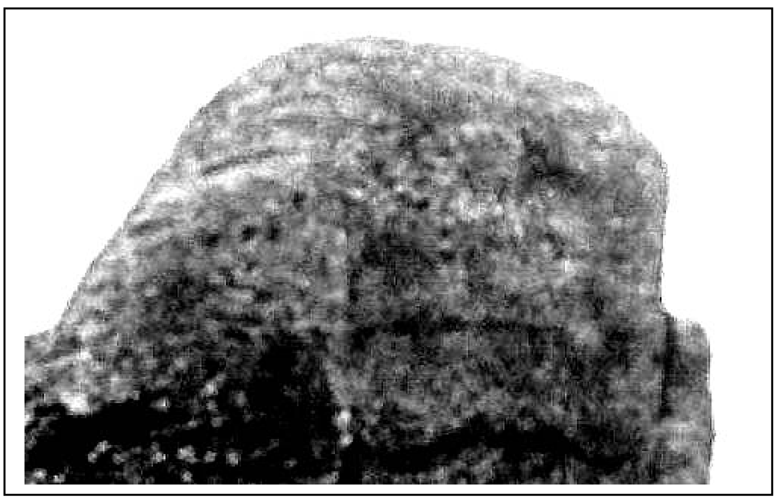
*(**Perrot et Chipiez**, Grece primitive, Pl. XVI. 11; 20)*

[4. The funerary columns of Mycenae had also the shape of a **trapeze**.
On one of these funerary stelae **a column** is figured in the middle, and on its both sides are shown the gold chains of the Olympus rock, in the shape of thick ropes bent in zig-zags].

On the other engraved stone the artist has represented only one big altar. It is the "ara maxima" of theogony, near which the Olympian gods had made their pact in their difficult war with the Titans. On both sides of this altar one lion is figured with only one head among them.

The archaeological study of this important monument from the Carpathians forces us to open at this point another parenthesis.

Above the two almost parallel lines which we see impressed with such expression on this column, can still be distinguished the almost vanished marks which represented a huge human head in profile. The figure looks towards left, and from the head descend three long hair locks, twisted by the archaic custom. It has a very curious physiognomy. The upper part of the profile has a remarkable preeminence compared to the lower part. It is the same characteristic type also appearing on some painted vases, discovered in the cyclopean houses of Mycenae (**Schliemann**, Mycenes, p.211. 217; **Perrot**, Grece primitive, p.935; **Duruy**, Hist. d. Grecs. I. 35).



(TN – I enlarged the particular area of the rock about which Densusianu is talking, without retouching it. One can see very clearly the two heads, the lion's head on the left, and the human's head on the right).

This human figure, which still adorns the column of the Carpathians, was also well known to Greek antiquity.

Various specimens of ceramic painting present the legendary pillar of the sky in the shape of a Ionic or Doric column, and near this column a human figure in profile, having in everything the same characteristic type as that from the monument of Dacia.

One of these paintings represents the ordeal of Prometheus on Atlas mountain.

The hero of human wisdom has his hands and legs tied to a Doric column. The vulture tears up his chest. In front of Prometheus is Atlas, with bent knees, supporting on his shoulders the immense weight of the sky, under the shape of a huge boulder. On the left there is shown a large irritated serpent, which rises up on its tail, intent on biting Atlas. Certainly the artist wanted to represent the dragon from the garden of the Hesperides, which, according to legends, guarded the golden apples which Atlas had taken.

Prometheus' physiognomy and his long locks present a curious resemblance with the human head whose marks can still be observed on the column of Bucegi.

On top of this column on which Prometheus is tied up, there is figured a bird of a gentle nature, smaller than the vulture. It is the Phoenix of the ancients, or another bird symbolizing the sky, which we often find represented in antique paintings, either on top of some column, or in other scenes with the Olympian gods (**Lenormant**, Elite d. mon. ceramograph. I. pl. XXIX A, XXIX B; LXV A, LXXI). In Romanian carols is mentioned even today a bird which dwells in heaven, admired by God and angels for its sweet melodious songs (**Teodorescu**, Folk poetry, p.89).

This smallish bird, figured in at attitude as of singing, indicates in any case that Prometheus is tied on the sky column.



The ordeal of **Atlas** and **Prometheus**.
Scene supported by the **gigantic column of the Universe**.
Painting on a vase.
*(**Gerhard**, Auserles. Vasenbilder. Taf. LXXXVI)*

This entire scene which presents the ordeal of the two famous titans, is supported at its base by another stronger column. The artist wanted to express through this new motif that the figure of Atlas, which supports on his shoulders the weight of the sky, and the figure of chained Prometheus, were represented on the gigantic column of the world.

We find another interpretation of the human figure from the column of Dacia on a chalice discovered in Etruria in the digs from Camposcala (**Lenormant**, Ibid, I. pl. LXIII).
The decoration from this antique chalice shows the birth of Minerva from Jove's head, executed by an artist from Italy after a Greek model. The great ***Zeus*** is shown in profile, sitting on a throne (high backed chair). At his back is represented a Ionic column. The god is crowned with laurels, and four long, twisted hair locks fall on his shoulders. His physiognomy presents the same type as that of the archaic profile from the monument of the Carpathians.

This column from the Omul Peak had been therefore very well known to the artists of Greco-Roman antiquity. It had been considered as the most sacred monument of the ancient world, symbol of the divine throne, traditional model of hieratic painting.
Only one symbol had remained enigmatic. The titanic figure, whose faint marks are still seen on the column from Carpathians, appeared so effaced even during the historical times of Greece, that some considered that it represented Prometheus in chains, while others saw in it ***Zeus***, the sovereign of Olympus.

We return now to the emblem from the cyclopean walls of Mycenae.
Apart from its religious symbolism, this emblem had at the same time the character of a **national tradition.** It attested the origin of the dynasty and of the tribes which had once founded the powerful capital of Argos.
From this monument of the cyclopean times, the city of Mycenae appears as a colony founded by people from the north of Istru, the Pelasgian shepherds who had come to the southern lands from the Carpathians [5].

[5**. Atlas** appears in ancient traditions as the **ancestor** of several famous dynasties and families from the southern Pelasgian regions, not only from the Peloponnesus (Mycenae, Corinth, Sparta, Elis, Arcadia), but also from other regions of Hellada, Asia Minor, Italy and Africa.
Electra, one of his daughters, is the mother of **Dardanos**, the patriarch of the Trojans. Another daughter of Atlas, **Calypso**, is the mother of **Auson** and **Latinus**; and finally, his daughter **Pasiphae** is the mother of **Ammon**, the shepherd king of Libya and Egypt (**Pauly-Wissowa**, R. E., Atlas, p.2122)].

Curtius writes about the conditions in which the ancient colonies of Hellada were formed and governed (**Bouche-Leclercq**, Histoire grecque, I. 575).

These colonists took their country with them everywhere they went. They took the fire from the hearth of their mother-city. From there they also took the images of the gods of their race. They were accompanied by priests and prophets descended from the old families. The protective divinities of the old metropolis were invited to take part in this new settlement and these colonists were always animated by the wish to represent everything in their new country after the model of their city of birth: acropolis, temple, plazas and streets. The colony took often the name of the mother-city, or the name of a village which belonged to it.

So, during the time of the building of its cyclopean walls, the city of Mycenae appears to have been, as expressed figuratively by its emblem, subordinate, from a religious point of view, to the cult of Dacia. But the religious and political administration was concentrated in those times in the same hands. The great priests were at the same time the kings.

We can therefore suppose that Mycenae in ante-Homeric times was subordinated not only to the religious hierarchy from the north of the Danube, but it had also to accept the decisions of the mother country in some political matters.

In the great war with the Trojans, Mycenae played the principal and decisive role.

The Pelasgians of Hellada and Thrace, allied with the Pelasgians from the north of Istru, fought the Pelasgians of Asia Minor for the rule of the seas which separated Europe from Asia. Troy was destroyed. A part of its citizens was taken in captivity and another part was forced to emigrate. History though, this divine nemesis, had reserved to Mycenae the same sad fate.

As **Diodorus Siculus** writes (lib. XI. 65), "during the 78th Olympiad (468bc) a war erupted between the inhabitants of Argos and Mycenae.

The cause was the following: the inhabitants of Mycenae, proud of the ancient glory of their country, refused to accept the hegemony of Argos, in contrast to the other cities from the province of the Argolid. They governed themselves by their own laws and institutions, which had nothing in common with those of the Argiens. The Mycenaeans also had a quarrel with the Argiens for the temple of Juno and for the religious ceremonies of that temple, and they pretended at the same time that the direction and administration of the Nemeian games belonged to them.

As for the Argiens, they resented Mycenae because, while the Argiens had decided to send help to the Spartans at Thermopyle only with the condition of receiving part of the supreme command, the Mycenaeans alone among all the inhabitants of the Argolid had sent troupes to help the Spartans. Finally, the Argiens feared that the Mycenaeans will contest their hegemony, encouraged by their ancient glory.

So the Argiens, envious of Mycenae and having wanted for a long time to destroy this city, believed that the time had come, especially seeing that the Spartans were in no situation to give help to Mycenae. So, they gathered a large army from Argos and other allied cities and sent it

against Mycenae. The inhabitants of Mycenae were defeated and withdrew inside the walls, where they were besieged. They resisted for a while, but finally they weakened and because the Spartans could not send them any help, as they had their own wars and calamities, like some earthquakes, the citadel was assaulted. The citizens were taken into captivity and Mycenae was razed to the ground.
This city, which in ancient times had enjoyed a great prosperity, which had given birth to famous men, and boasted glorious deeds, was destroyed and has been deserted to our own days".

And **Pausanias** writes (lib. V. 23. 3; VII. 25. 6) too on this matter:
After the Persians were chased out of Greece, Mycenae and Tirynth were destroyed by the Argiens. Because the Argiens could not conquer Mycenae because of its walls which were very strong, built as it is told, by the Cyclops, the inhabitants of Mycenae were defeated through famine and forced to leave the city and the citadel. Some withdrew at Cleonae (between Corinth and Argos), others ran to Cerynia in Arcadia and almost half of them withdrew to Macedonia.

The fall and destruction of Mycenae had happened during the time of **Euripides**. He alludes to this fate of Mycenae in one of his fine tragedies (Orestes, v. 947 seqq).
Electra, the daughter of king Agamemnon, who after his return from Troy had been killed by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegistus, laments like this:
"Oh, **country of the Pelasgians** (***o Pelasgia***), I begin to lament you and with my white nails I scratch my bleeding face and I beat my head, as it is fit for you, beautiful queen of the other world. Let the **country of the Cyclopes** (***ga Kyclopia***) lament with me, let her undo her tresses and mourn the unhappiness of the house of the Atreides. They deserve this lamentation for the family which once commanded the armies of Greece has been extinguished. It vanished, it vanished the entire family of the descendents of Pelops, vanished the glory which had crowned the head of this blessed house. It succumbed because of the envy of the gods and because of the hostile and murderous feeling which overcame the community of Argos. Oh! piteous race of the mortals, condemned to suffering, you can see how fate brings suddenly upon us misfortunes over misfortunes ….
Oh! if I could go to that **rock which rises between sky and earth**, to that piece of land at that Olympus, tied all around with gold chains, and call from there, crying, the ancient father **Tantalus**, who gave birth to the ancestors of my people" (Ibid, Orestes, v. 969-977) [6].

[6. The Olympus of Euripides is the Olympus from near Oceanos potamos, the father of the gods (**Homer**, Iliad, XIV. v. 201. 246; **Hesiod**, Theog. v. 119), the **Olympus Atlantiacus** of **Calpurnius** (IV. 83), or from the country of the Hyperboreans at north of Istru, where, according to **Ovid** (Pont. II. 10. 45), **Pliny** (H. N. IV. 26. 11) and **Mela** (III. 5), were the **cardines mundi**, the pillars or hinges of the universe].

This rock from ancient Olympus at the ends of the world, identical with the column of the Carpathians, had played therefore an immense role in the traditions and beliefs of the Pelasgians of Argos. It had been the sacred symbol of the country from where the dynasty of Mycenae drew its origin and this symbol had been figured on its cyclopean walls, had been represented on the funerary stelae of the Mycenaean aristocracy and on the engraved stones which served as seals and amulets [7].

[7. The **origin of the Mycenaean dynasty** having been near the mountains of Bucegi can also be confirmed by the ancient **kinship of families**.
Between ancient Argos and the region of south-eastern Carpathians there exists a surprising identity of family names.

Representatives of the ancient Pelasgian families from Argos appear to have been the following:
Perseus, the founder of Mycenae (**Pausanias**, II. 15. 4), and **Sthenelos**, a son of his;
Pelops, the great hero of Hellada, venerated as a demi-god even by Hercules (**Pausanias**, V. 13. 1. 2). His reign had extended over the entire Peloponnesus, to which it had been given his name;
Atreus, a son of Pelops, king of Mycenae;
Tantalos, a friend and guest of the gods on Olympus, the father of Pelops. He had been king in Sipylos (**Apollodorus**, II. 5. 6), but certainly not Sipylos of Phrygia. He had been married to one of the daughters of Atlas (Dione or Tagyete);
Dasculos, a son of Tantalos;
Inachos, a son of the river Oceanos (prehistoric Istru), mythical king in Argos;
Proetos, king in Argos, under the reign of whom **Tirynth** was surrounded with cyclopean walls (**Pausanias**, II. 16. 5).

In the Romanian villages from the feet of Bucegi mountain in Transilvania, still existed, according to official acts from the beginning of the past century, and maybe still exist today, the following ancient families: **Persoiu**, **Plesa**, **Andreiu**, **Inescu**, **Preotesa**, **Turia**, **Stanciu**, **Staniloiu** and **Tatar**.
The name Tatar appears as very ancient in the northern parts of Istru. The historian **Herodorus**, who lived before Herodotus, mentions a Scythian with the name of **Teutaros**, who had taught Hercules the art of the bow and arrows (Fragm. 5).

As we see, there is a remarkable resemblance between the names of the ancient princely persons from Argos and the names of some Romanian families from the vicinity of Bucegi, and this resemblance acquires a historical value when we keep in mind that the origin of the Pelasgians from Argos goes back (by monuments and traditions) to the north of Istru and to the same group of mountains.

The name **Pelops** seems though to correspond more to the form **Pelescu** or **Peles**.
The name **Atreus**, its original form has certainly been **Andreius**, as the same name appears in Romania in the form **Andreiu** and also **Udrea** (three villages called **Udresci** exist in the districts of Prahova, Dambovita and Arges). **Andreiu** was one of the famous Pelasgian families which had settled in Hellada. **Pausanias** tells us (IX. 34. 6) that a certain Andreiu (***'Andreus***) had been the founder of **Orchomenos**, Pelasgian city in Beotia, which in prehistoric times had reached the same prosperity as Mycenae.

As for the name **Mycenae** or **Mucena**, **Pausanias** writes (II. 16. 4) that the city was given its name after **Mycene**, the daughter of king Inachos, and according to the cyclical poets, Mycena, the daughter of Inachos, was a niece or granddaughter of the **Ocean** or Istru (**Homer**, Carmina. Ed. Firmin-Didot, p. 601. 3). In Fagaras county, which stretches to the foot of Bucegi mountain, exists the family name of **Mucia**, in Prahova district a village has the name **Mocesci**, in Ramnicul-Sarat district two other villages are called **Mucesci**, and in Braila district we have **Mucheni** village].

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XVI. *HRAKLEOS STELAI* – THE COLUMNS OF HERCULES

1. The old traditions about the Columns of Hercules

In the Greek-Roman antiquity it had been retained a memory about two famous monuments of the prehistoric world, named ***'Hrakleos stelai*** or **The Columns of Hercules**, which were situated near a mountain gorge in the western parts of the Homeric Ocean.

Two versions were circulating in antiquity about the origin and function of these columns.

Some of these traditions claimed that the famous Columns of Hercules were simple commemorative monuments **"laborum Herculis metae"**. Hercules, as **Pliny** tells us, had reached these domains and, because here the mountains on both sides were joined together, he had cut the mountain catenary, had opened the gorge and had let the inland sea beyond it to flow through. In memory of this expedition and its everlasting achievements, the indigenous population named two mountains which form this gorge, "The Columns of Hercules" *(Pliny, Melae, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo).*

According to another tradition, as ancient as the first, presented by the poet **Pindar**, the Columns of Hercules were simple **guide posts** for navigation on the ocean and travel on land. Hercules, writes Pindar, has put these columns up as **famous evidence for the extreme reach of navigation**, because he had subdued the sea monsters (to make the sea navigable), he had scrutinised **the fords of the flowing rivers** right to the end of the road and at the same time he had also **surveyed** the land; and beyond these columns neither the wise nor the imprudent could pass.

Here was therefore the extreme reach of navigation on the old Ocean, because, as **Scylax** writes, near the Columns of Hercules, there stretched from one shore to the other a **strip of crags**, some of which were hit by waves, while others were hidden under the water.

The geographical position of these columns was very well known during the first times of history, as it results from the sentences of oracles and from some more authentic topographical descriptions. But later, when navigation on the big seas had passed from Pelasgian hands under the power of the Phoenicians, when the Homeric Ocean became mixed up with the External Sea or the Iberian Ocean, the true position of the Columns of Hercules became enigmatic for the Greek world of the southern parts of Europe. This geographical obscurity led afterwards the Greek authors to assume that the Columns of Hercules were situated not near the Pelasgian Ocean, or the Ocean of Theogony, but near the Iberian Ocean, which anyway, became known very late to the commercial world of the Eastern Mediterranean.

So it was that in Greek literature arose the general belief that the miraculous Columns of Hercules had to be found near the straits of the Mediterranean, between Spain and Mauritania. And, because there were neither traditions in those parts, nor monuments regarding Hercules, the name of Columns was given (contrary to all ancient customs) to the two promontories of Europe and Africa, the northern one being named **Calpe** and the southern **Abila**.

This transplantation of the Columns of Hercules from the Homeric Ocean to the Iberian Ocean brought afterwards an enormous confusion in the geography, ethnography and history of the pre-Herodotic times. Mountains and rivers, islands and lakes, peoples and cities, legends and historical events were dislocated from the Eastern parts of Europe and thrown on the geographical maps of the extreme Occident *(The cosmography of Iulius Honorius).* The errors multiplied from century to century and the **fiction** of some plagiarists and poets about the Columns of Hercules at the straits of the Mediterranean, assumed a **geographical character.**

2. The Tyrians look for the Columns of Hercules near the straits of the Mediterranean, the Romans near the North Sea.

The **Tyrians**, the famous representatives of the Phoenician commerce, had tried three times, as **Strabo** tells us, to find the Columns of Hercules near the western straits of the Mediterranean, but always without a positive result. According to this author, the inhabitants of Gades were telling how the Tyrians, wanting to set up a new colony, had first consulted the oracle, as were the religious customs of the ancients, and the oracle had suggested to found their colony near the **Columns of Hercules.** The men sent by the Tyrians to visit those lands arrived at Calpe, or the western straits of the Mediterranean. Believing that in those extreme parts was the end of the earth and of Hercules' expeditions, they reasoned that the columns of which the oracle spoke should also be there. They kept therefore a religious service, but the result of the sacrifice being unfavourable, they returned home. After some time the Tyrians sent again another party to the place indicated by the oracle. These men passed beyond the straits, to a distance of 1500 stades and arrived to an island which was consecrated to Hercules. Believing that here must be the Columns of Hercules, they sacrificed to the god, but again the victims were not favourable and they returned home. Finally, the Tyrians sent another group of people for the third time. They settled on the island named Gadeira (Gades), where they founded a temple on the eastern side and a city on the western side of the island. That's why, says Strabo, some believe that the extreme parts of the straits could be the so called Columns of Hercules, while others, on the contrary, consider as the Columns of Hercules, either the mountains Calpe and Abila, or some smaller islands in the vicinity of these mountains. But **Artemidor of Ephesus**, a renowned geographical investigator, who had navigated along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and in part of the External Ocean, tells us that there is no mountain named **Abila** at the Mediterranean straits. And Strabo adds that neither these islands, nor these mountains have the appearance of columns, and that people who insist that the so called Columns of Hercules must be found somewhere else, have good reasons for it.

The Romans had conquered the southern parts of Iberia even before the destruction of Carthage (146bc), but none of the Roman generals, who had marched with the legions of Italy, as far as the Western Ocean, none of the captains of the fleet, who had passed through

the Mediterranean straits *(Pliny)*, have claimed the glory of discovering the sacred Columns of Hercules, and of taking the eagle of the Roman Empire beyond the extreme limits of the ancient world. On the contrary, there was a general tradition with the Roman people, that the legendary Columns of Hercules were situated near another ocean, and that Drus Germanicus had been the one who had wanted to win the glory of finding them and of expanding the Roman Empire to those ends of the earth.

"We" writes **Tacitus** "have tried to cross even **the Northern Ocean**, because it is told that the **Columns of Hercules still exist there**, either because Hercules really went there, or because we use to attribute to his glory all the miraculous things, wherever they are on the surface of the earth. In this regard, **Drus Germanicus** did not lack the courage, but the Ocean had opposed his wish to master it and to find the Columns of Hercules. Nobody has tried to look for these columns ever since. Anyway, it is much more religious and respectful to believe in gods' acts, than to know them". So, the miraculous Columns of Hercules, looked for by the Tyrians and Artemidor at the Mediterranean straits, and by Drus Germanicus in the Northern Ocean, have remained a geographical enigma during the whole of the Greek-Roman antiquity and until our days.

3. The Columns of Hercules near Oceanos potamos or Ister.

In pre-historical antiquity, the Columns of Hercules had been a geographical reality. This was the general opinion of the ancient geographers and historians.

The positive fact that results from all these traditions is that the so called Columns of Hercules were neither near the Iberian Ocean, which, until the 7th century b.c. was unknown to the Phoenicians and Greeks, nor near the Northern Sea or Baltic, which became known to the ancient world only since Cesar's times. They were near the archaic Ocean at the north of Thrace, the big river of the theogony, the place where take place the most remarkable deeds of the Pelasgian hero Hercules, in the happy country of the Hyperboreans, rich in gold, rich in flocks, in miraculous herds and fabulous harvests, country towards which was aimed the commercial navigation of the southern Pelasgians, Egyptians, Phoenicians and Greeks, even since the most ancient times.

We will summarise here the main geographical sources regarding the Columns of Hercules, near **Oceanos potamos** or **Ister**.

According to **Pindar**, one of the most illustrious poets of Greece, the Columns of Hercules were in the legendary and far away country of the pious and happy Hyperboreans.

In one of his most beautiful odes, Pindar tells us about Hercules' trip to **the sources** (or the cataracts) of **Ister**, **in the country of the Hyperboreans**, from whom he had requested an oleander (wild olive tree), to plant it near Jove's temple in Olympia, to shade the holy altars of the divinities and to crown the virtuous men. In the same ode, Pindar also mentions Hercules' travel to the **Istrian country**, to Diana, the wonderful rider, and the **Columns of Hercules**, as an extreme limit for brave deeds. Finally, Pindar tells us in other odes of his, that Hercules

had erected these columns as famous markers for the extreme limits of navigation; and that the last reaches of travel on water and land were in **the region of the Hyperboreans**.

So, from the geographical notions which we see expressed by Pindar, the Columns of Hercules, these extreme limits of navigation and heroic actions, were on **Hyperborean territory**, the territory of the just, holy, wise *(Origenes)* and long lived people of the Ister, or the lower Danube.

We find also with **Herodotus** two important indications about the geographical situation of the **Columns of Hercules**. As this author tells us, the Greeks near the Euxine Pontos had positive knowledge about the Columns of Hercules, which they said were **outside the Euxine Pontos**, near the big river named **Oceanos**. And in another place Herodotus tells us about the Columns of Hercules being located in the geographical region of the **Ister**.

"The Ister" writes he "begins its course in the lands of the Celts and flows through the middle of Europe, which it cuts in two parts. **The Celts though live beyond the Columns of Hercules** and are neighbours with the **Cynesii**, who are the most extreme people in the western parts of Europe. And the Ister flows into the sea near **Istria**, city which is inhabited by a Milesian colony". So, if the Columns of Hercules had been therefore situated on the southern parts of Iberia, between Africa and Europe, then neither the Greeks near the Euxine Pontos could have had in those times authentic knowledge about them, nor Herodotus could have written that, beyond the Columns of Hercules live the Celts, and finally, that beyond the Celts there lived the Cynesii, the most extreme people in the western parts of Europe.

So, according with the geographical sources of Herodotus, the Columns of Hercules were not near the Iberian Sea, but in a continental region of Europe, near the Ister, on the eastern side of the Celts, or between the Celts and the Scythians, because, as **Diodorus Siculus** writes, the Celts were spread, in more or less considerable large groups, as far as Scythia.

Another remarkable author from the 4^{th} century a.d., the Roman poet **Avien**, born at Volsinium in Etruria, ex proconsul of Africa and Achaia, summarises this way the geographical and astronomical ideas of the ancients, regarding the Columns of Hercules:

"In the extreme parts of the (known) earth rise up to the sky the Columns of Hercules, of a longish shape. Here is the place called **Gadir**, here the superb craggy **Atlas** rises, **here the sky turns around a strong axle, here the hub of the earth and the universe** is surrounded by clouds".

Cardines Mundi on the Atlas mountain, called also **axis boreus, axis hyperboreus, polus Geticus**, were, as we saw in the previous chapter, in the western parts of the Black Sea, on the territory of Roman Dacia. The Columns of Hercules belonged therefore, according to the ancient astronomical and geographical theories, to the **boreal region**.

This was also the Romans' tradition, but a tradition difficult to understand for the times of Drus Germanicus. He had tried to find the Columns of Hercules near the Northern Sea.

Finally, the Pelasgian tribes of Asia Minor had preserved until Pausania's times a historical reminiscence about **Geryon**, the king rich in admirable herds, who lived near **Oceanos potamos**, or near the Columns of Hercules. "The Lydians" writes Pausanias "tell that Geryon,

Chrysaor's son, lived near the torrent called **Oceanos potamos** and that there, in a mountain gap was his seat". So there is a positive fact, confirmed by legends, traditions and geographical descriptions that the famous Columns of Hercules were situated north of Thrace, near the big river called in the following epochs **Oceanos potamos** or **Ister**.

4. Erythia or Rusava island, near the Columns of Hercules.

Close to the Columns of Hercules was situated, as the ancient geographers tell, the island, which the Greeks named **Erythia** (**Rosia, Rusava -** *TN: the **Red, Ruddy***), in which the giant king, called in Greek legends **Geryon**, kept at pasture his magnificent cattle herds, cows and oxen with wide foreheads and flexible legs *(Titus Liviu, Hesiod).*

Among the twelve labours which the king Eurystheus of Mycenae had imposed on Hercules, the tenth one was to bring him Geryon's famous herds from the **Erythia** island.

Hercules, **Apollodorus** tells us, after arriving near **Oceanos**, where **Erythia** island was, erects in the mountains two columns, one facing the other, as monumental markers of his travel, then kills the herdsman **Eurythion** and his dog called **Orthros**, takes **Geryon**'s herds and departs. Geryon though, hearing of this theft, runs after Hercules and catches up with him at the river called **Anthemunta**. The fight starts. Hercules shoots Geryon down with an arrow, then takes the herds into **Abderia** and from here into the land of the **Lygiens**. Here he is confronted by the heroes **Alebion** and **Dercunos** (Dercynos), who want to take his herds. But Hercules kills them also, and continues on his way across Tyrrhenia.

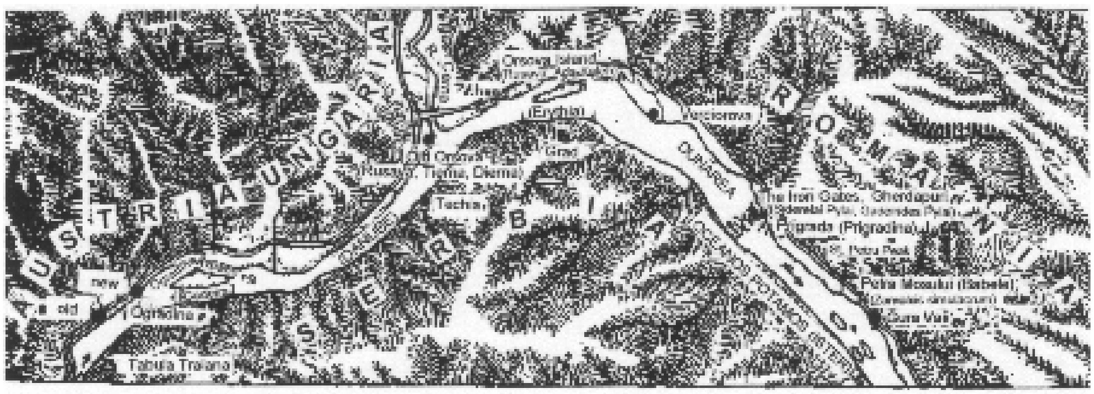
This island, called Erythia, in which king Geryon kept his magnificent herds, was not in the External Ocean, as Greek geographers of later times of antiquity erroneously assumed, but it was situated close to the **Euxine Pontos**, in the western parts of the river named **Oceanos potamos** or **Ister**.

"The Greeks who dwell near the Euxine Pontos" writes **Herodotus** "tell that Hercules, driving the cattle herds which he had taken from Geryon, came to this country, which at that time was deserted, but now is owned by the Scythians. And they tell that **Geryon dwelt outside of the Euxine Pontos, in the island which the Greeks call Erythia (Rosia, Rusava), situated near Gadira** (Gedeira), **outside of the Columns of Hercules, in the Ocean**".

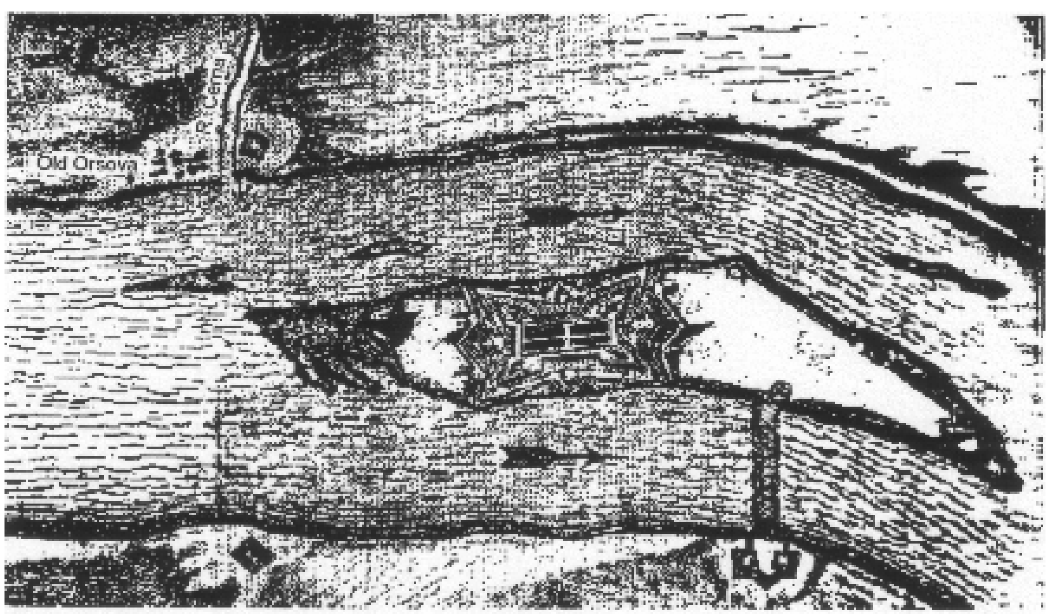
As it results from this tale, the Greeks from near the Black Sea had some historical traditions about the theft of Geryon's herds, and they had positive geographical knowledge about the place where the Columns of Hercules were situated, and about the island named Erythia, located outside of the Euxine Pontos, near the same columns.

The name "**Erythia**" under which Geryon's island appears in the ancient geographical literature, presents only a simple Greek translation of an indigenous name. This statement is made by **Herodotus** himself by the words "the Greeks call it Erythia".

Another author of antiquity, the famous **Hecateus of Miletus**, who had lived during the times of Darius Hystaspes and had navigated along Spain's and Italy's shores, declares also, based on his information, that the island called Erythia was not to be found at the Iberian straits.



The Danube strait at the **Iron Gates**, Fretum Herculeum, with **Rusava** (**Erythia**) and **Ogradena** (**Gadeira**) islands. Scale 1:200 000



Rusava island (ancient **Erythia**) in the Danube river, upstream from the **Iron Gates**.
From an XVIII century etching. Ureche, History of the Romanians.

“That Geryon”, writes he, “against whom king Eurystheus sent Hercules to take his herds and bring them to Mycenae, has nothing to do with the Iberian region, nor was Hercules sent to some island Erythia, outside of the big sea (Mediterranean), but to Geryon on the continent, who was king over the region beside Ambracia and Amphiloch”.

Finally, **the Orphic poem** about the **Argonauts** tells us that the island **Erythia** was at the straits of **the Caucasus mountains**. And under the name of “Caucasus” figure, as we know, Dacia’s Carpathians, not only in the legends of Typhon, Prometeus, and the Argonauts, but also on a Latin inscription from the time of emperor Trajan, in Jornande’s history of the Getae and finally, even with the Russian historian Nestor.

So, Erythia island, which was a simple geographical fiction at the western straits of the Mediterranean, but about which the Greek merchants, settled near the Euxine Pontos, had positive information, and which was situated at the straits of the Caucasus mountains, in the big river from north of Thrace (Oceanos potamos), could not be other than the island located upstream of Ister’s cataracts, near the city called in folk Romanian language **Rusava**, and officially **Orsova**.

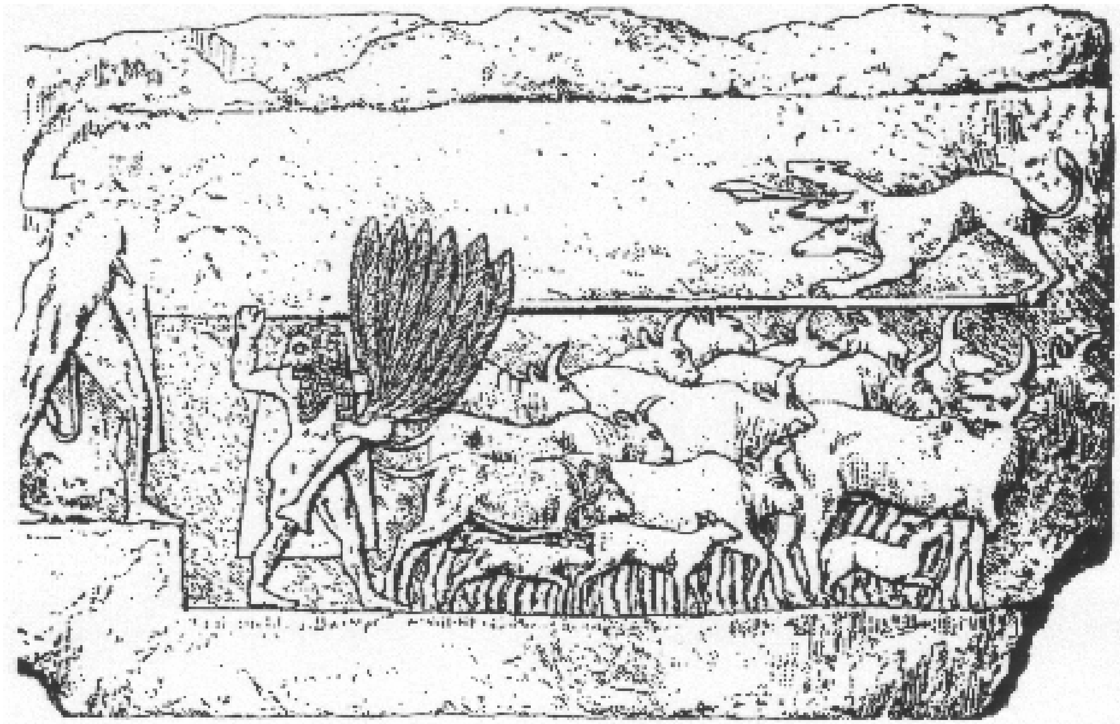
We find a very precious indication in Geryon’s genealogy, about the name under which Erythia island was known by the indigenes living by the Ister. In Greek legends Geryon’s father is named ***Krysaor***, the one with the gold sword. Leaving out the sharp aspiration K, this word looks like **Rusaor**. So, we have here a topographical surname taken from the town called even today **Rusava**.

Even from the most remote times of Pelasgian history, the lower parts of the Ister were renowned for the extremely beautiful flocks, herds and horses belonging to its inhabitants. Thousands of flocks and as many thousands of herds, the old legends said, were wandering through the extensive pastures belonging to the titan Atlas, king in the country of the Hyperboreans *(Ovid).* **Theopompus** writes also that in the region of the Peoni, a population spread through Macedonia and Thrace, lived the oxen much admired by the Greeks, whose horns, of an extraordinary size, were fitted with silver and gold and used at solemn banquets or as precious ornaments. Finally, the Dacians who lived on the banks of the Danube, were renowned in the 4th century a.d. as far as Italy, for their immense riches in cattle *(Paulinus)*.

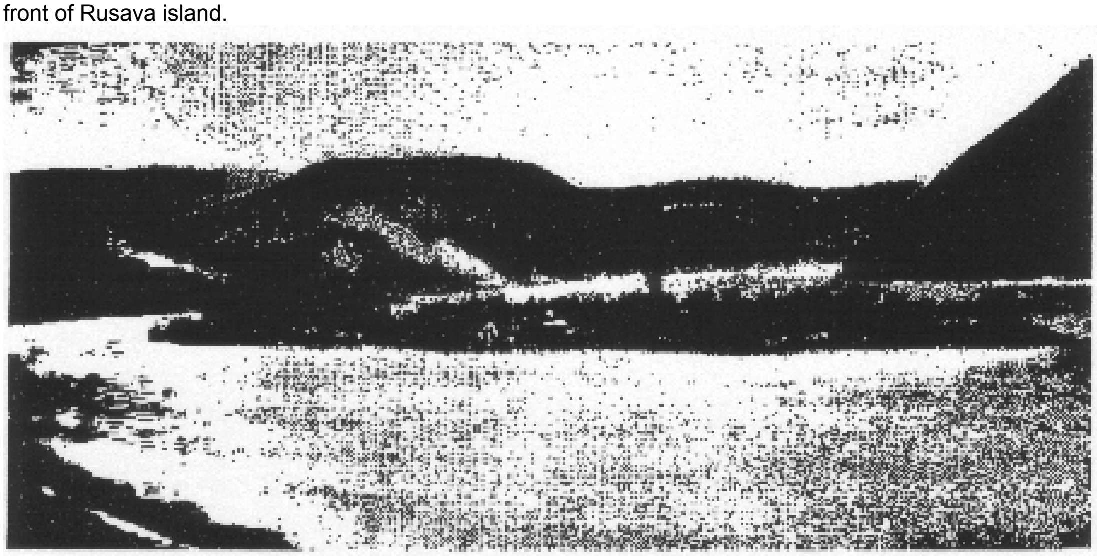
In the old times (or the Pelasgian epoch), writes **Pausanias**, the main ambition of people regarding wealth, was to have magnificent herds of cattle and horses and the fame of Geryon’s noble race of oxen had spread far and wide.

The legend about Hercule’s expedition against Geryon had a historical foundation.

In heroic Romanian songs echoes even today the recollection about the Greeks who had crossed to the northern bank of the Danube and had stolen herds of magnificent, giant oxen from the mountains which separate Romania from Transylvania. And another traditional Romanian song mentions an ancient hero, a fighter with a mace (Hercules), who had taken five thousand oxen from the lands along the Danube and had taken them to a king from southern lands *(Tocilescu).*



Bas-relief discovered at Athienau in Cyprus, representing the tenth labour of Hercules, or **the theft of Geryon's herds from the island of Erythia**, **Rusava** of today *(Ceccaldi "Monuments antiques de Cypre)*. On the left is represented **Hercules**, on the moment of alighting on the lower end of the island, wearing on his back the skin of the Nemeic lion, whose tail hangs behind his legs. The upper part of the body and the head are faded. His right arm, which is partly visible, is bent upwards. The hero draws his bow and shoots an arrow towards the three headed guarding dog **Orthros**, which is threatening him. **Eurythion**, Geryon's herdsman, hastens to drive the herds of oxen, cows and calves to the upper end of the island, to cross with them to the nearest bank. With his left hand he holds tightly at his chest the **oleander**, the holy tree of the island, which he has uprooted and taken with him, in order to prevent Hercules from stealing it. With his right arm he makes a threatening gesture towards Hercules, implying that for this sacrilege punishment will follow. Beyond and in front of the band representing the island, the artist shows **two other bands**, with an almost **smooth** surface, which represent the calm waters of the Danube. In the background, at the edge of the water, the nearby mountains are represented in contours, which present the same shapes as do the heights existing today on the southern bank of the Danube, in front of Rusava island.



Actual view of **Rusava** island, ancient **Erythia**. In the background is the same group of mountains represented on the bas-relief from Cyprus.

In Greco-Roman antiquity Geryon's legend had a much wider scope than it is presented in the episode of Hercules' labour.

Geryon is one of the big heroes of the Pelasgian epic from the Danube. He appears in Romanian epic songs under the names **Gruia, Gruian** *(Teodorescu)* and **Iorguta** (*Geryones* with Apollodorus, *Geryoneus* with Hesiod, Geryon, Geryoneus with Varro). He is also called **Pana Rusiana, Roman Grue Grozovanul** *(Catana),* and **Roscovan**, topographical epithets after the name of the island and the town **Rusava.** Gruia is "son of a king", a gallant *(Francu)* from Ardel (TN - Transylvania), or from the mountains of Ardel *(Tocilescu)*. He comes to the Danube often, where he sails on the lustre of the waters "in a fine kayak, adorned in a flowery green cloth" *(Corcea).* As for the hero's appearance, he is of an epic beauty "his forehead is three hands wide, he is broad in shoulders, neither tall, nor thick, just how a man should look his best, and the people fear him" *(Catana)*. But the Greek authors exaggerated in a fantastic way his physical qualities and showed him like a monster, with three heads *(Hesiod),* three chests *(Lucretius)* or three bodies *(Apollodorus).* In this way, from a beautiful heroic poem of the Pelasgian times, they have created a confusion of the most bizarre fantasies, like they had presented, in the same unnatural way, the Giants, the Cyclops, the Centimanis, Typhon and other northern heroes.

According to Romanian traditions the hero Gruia had also a sister with the name of **Rusanda** *(Bibicescu).* The origin of this name is incontestably the island **Erythia or Rusava.**

Rusanda herself is an old epic character. She was known to the Greek legends under the correspondent name of **Erythia** (*Pausanias, Stephanos Byzantinus).* The only difference is that in Greek traditions Erythia (or Rusanda) is the daughter, not the sister of Geryon.

The Greek legends about Hercule's fight with Geryon also mentioned two distinguished heroes of the antiquity, one called **Alebion** and the other **Dercunos**, both from the **Lygiens**' lands [1], both the sons of **Neptune**. According to their genealogy, Alebion and Dercunos were therefore from near the big waters over which Neptune ruled, who had the particular epithets of ***thalassios*** and ***pontomedon***. They had met Hercules with war, to take back his herds, as probable natural allies of Geryon.

[1. The **Ligyens** (***Ligyes***) from Geryon's legend should not be mistaken for the **Ligurians**, also named by Greek authors ***Ligyes***, whom we find later settled on the southern shore of Gaul and in the neighbouring lands of Italy. From an ethnographical point of view, these groups formed without doubt one and the same people. **Aristotle** spoke in one of his works about the **Ligyrei** from Thrace. And **Hesiod** mentions the **Ligyi** as a people settled near the **Ippomolgian Scythians**. The **Lygiens**' territory, in the legends about Hercules and Dercunos, seems to have been on the lower part of the Ister. According to traditions of the Greeks from the Euxine Pontos *(Herodotus)*, Hercules, returning to Mycenae with Geryon's herds, passed through **Scythia**, which means the western parts of the Black Sea. And as **Eschyl** tells us, the place where Hercules had to fight the Ligyens' army was covered with swamps and devoid of rocks]

Some reminiscences about the hero Dercunos have been preserved to this day in Romanian traditions. In the old folk songs he appears under the name of **Dragan**, or **Dragan from Baragan,** the nephew or grandson (TN - **nepot**) of old (TN - **mos**) **Stan** [2].

[2. This "**mos Stan**" is one of the oldest heroes of Romanian folk songs. He appears identical with **Stanislav**, the one "big in stature and terrible in countenance, whom the Danube reared, whom the Danube knows, she knows him and he knows her". He is celebrated also for his great skill in catching and breaking horses *(Teodorescu, Negoescu, Tocilescu).* The epic type of "**mos Stan**"

presents entirely the special characteristics of **Poseidon** (Neptune), the southern god of the waters, who had also the epithet of ***Eurysthenes*** (from ***stenos*** - physical strength) and of ***hippios***, because he was considered as having been the first to introduce the use of horses. In Italy Poseidon was honoured under the name of **Neptunus**. The Roman authors can't tell us though which was the origin of this name, although its form is old Latin. Varro tries to derive this name from **nuptus** (wrapping), since **nuptiae** (wedding), a wrong etymology, because the Roman literatti had generally neglected to study the folkloric traditions. But regarding the origin of the name **Neptunus**, and the old history of this divinity of the waters, so much adored in Greece and the Ionian islands, it is very important to note that in Romanian traditional songs about "**Dragan**" and "**old Stan**", the epithet "**Nepotul**" occurs constantly as part of their names. Either "Dragan from Baragan" is "nepotul of mos Stan", or "Stan from Baragan" is "nepotul of mos Dragan". So we have here the elements of an old historical tradition, anterior to the migration of the Latin tribes towards Italy]

And we have even a song fragment in which **Iorgovan** (Hercules), **Dragan** (Dercunos) and **Iorguta Roscovan** (Geryon), these illustrious representatives of the old wars, whose names had once echoed far and wide in the Pelasgian world, are mentioned all together.

Historic traditions about Dercunos or Dragan existed also with the Pelasgians from the western parts of Europe.

With **Virgil**, **Dercennus** is one of the old kings of Latium, before Latinus. The mound under which he was buried formed an enormous hill covered in shady oaks. With the Greek authors the name of the hero Dragan (Dercunos) had been altered. But we find a more correct form with the poet **Aviennus**. He mentions the **Ligiens** and the descendants of the **Dragani** (**Draganes** pl.), whose dwellings were in the region abundant in snow, or the lands of Scythia. These reminiscences found in Virgil's and Aviennus' poems, about an old king or hero named Dercennus or Draganes, attest that the legendary events, which form the cycle of Hercules - Geryon – Dercunos, come from an epoch when the migration of the Pelasgian tribes from the Carpathians towards the western lands had not finished yet.

We presented here the legends and geographical traditions of the ancients, regarding the island Erythia, from near the Columns of Hercules. And we have yet another precious archaeological document about the identity of this island, Erythia, identical with the island Rusava from the straits of the Danube, from beyond the Iron Gates.

On a bas-relief discovered in Cyprus at Athienau, which had once decorated the pedestal of a colossal statue of Hercules, is represented the scene of the theft of Geryon's herds from the island of Erythia. This monument presents an exceptional importance for the identification of the island Erythia with the island called today Rusava. The artist of Cyprus shows in this sculpture not only the longish shape of the island, as the ancients described it *(Pliny)*, but at the same time he depicts the terrain on the opposite side of the island, across the water.

In the background is represented with contours the whole group of mountains which complete the natural aspect of the island Erythia. There is an astonishing similarity with the real perspective presented even today by the hills and mountains in the vicinity of this island.

(TN - The island called Rusava and later on, after it was settled by Turks, Ada-Kaleh, has disappeared under the Danube's waters in 1972, as a result of the building of the great hydroelectric dam at the Iron Gates).

So, the geographical problem of the famous island **Erythia**, a problem so difficult for the ancients, appears today totally elucidated. The island Erythia, situated in the old Oceanos

potamos from north of Thrace, appears to have been, from traditions, from the most believable geographical descriptions, as well as from the chorographic image presented by the bas-relief of Cyprus, the island Rusava from the famous straits of the Danube, upstream from the Iron Gates.

5. The island Erythia or Rusava, by the Columns of Hercules, called *Kerne* and Cerne.

The island Erythia or Rusava, by the Columns of Hercules, appears also in antiquity under the name ***Kerne*** and **Cerne.** The Greek geographers considered for a long time that the island ***Kerne***, or ***Kernes***, situated in the old **Ocean** *(Eustathius)*, was located at the western straits of the Mediterranean, the place where they thought that the columns of Hercules must have once existed *(Hannonis Carthaginiensis, Scylacis, Dionysius, Palaephatius).* But, as the Columns of Hercules were never found on the western parts of the Mediterranean, at the straits today called Gibraltar, similarly it was never ascertained that an island named Cerne had existed there. Regarding this, **Strabo** writes the following: **the island Cerne**, which **Erathosthenes** mentions near the Columns of Hercules, **doesn't exist anywhere. Pliny the Old** believed in the existence of this island, but its position was an enigma for him. He tried first to locate it **in front of the Persian Gulf**, but was compelled to declare that he didn't know either its size, or its distance from the continent. Then, based on **Ephor**'s testimony, he mentioned some **columns**, which were nearby this island [3]. These were the legendary Columns of Hercules.

[3. According to Pliny, as well as to other authors of the antiquity, the island **Cerne** was inhabited by the **Ethiopians**. But, what sort of Ethiopians? A geographical question, about which a lot has been written. **Homer** mentions **two ethnic groups of Ethiopians**. Some of these dwelt in the east, while others dwelt near **Oceanos potamos**, the place where, according to the old traditions, the sun set. These latter Ethiopians are also called ***esperioi***, **westerners**, or from the western regions *(Strabonis)*, the most extreme people known to the Greeks, **virtuous** and **saintly**. The western Ethiopians, or from nearby Oceanos potamos, are gods' favourites. According to **Stephanos Byzantinos** they were the first to revere the gods, the first who used laws; and the founders of their civilisation had been **Mithras** and **Phlegyas**. Jove and all the gods attend their solemn banquets, when they sacrifice hundreds (hecatombs) of bulls and lambs *(Homer).* With the poet **Pindar**, these Ethiopians appear under the name of **Hyperboreans**, and with **Dionysius Periegetus**, under the name of **Macrobii**, or the long lived people. **Hesiod** places geographically the Ethiopians with the **Ligyiens** and the **Ippomolgian Scythians**. According to **Eschyl** they dwelt near the gold rich **Arimaspians**, according to **Dionysius Periegetus**, in the beautiful valleys of **Kernes** (Cerne), or near **Erythia**, near the Atlas mountain *(Avienus)*. According to **Scylax** they were the most handsome and tallest among all the known peoples. They dressed in multicoloured clothes, had beards and long hair, were skilful riders, archers and fighters. The Phoenician merchants sold them bottles and earthenware. They ate meat, drank milk and produced a lot of wine, which the Phoenicians bought from them. But, because of the geographical confusion with the Ethiopians of Africa, the texts of the ancient authors about the Ethiopians from the Oceanos potamos are full of **mistakes and interpolations**. But today it is difficult to understand the origin of the **name Ethiopians**, given to the inhabitants of that region close to the island of Cerne, or the cataracts of the Ister. It is sure though that the Greeks generally understood under the name of **Ethiopians**, people **burnt by the sun**, and they applied this name not only to part of the **Pelasgians**, who dwelt on the north side of the Ister, but also to the Pelasgians from the islands of Samothrace and Lesbos *(Pauly)*. The Ethiopians from near the Columns of Hercules were shown in the old geographical descriptions as a people rich in gold *(Mela, Herodotus).* It is worth to mention here that some Romanians in Transylvania, who work in the gold mines, are ironically called **Topi** (an echo of the old Greek name of ***Ethiopes***]

Finally, in another place in his natural history, **Pliny** considers the island Cerne to be situated close to Africa, but in an unspecified **Ocean**.

The Orphic literature throws an important light on this state of confusion of the old geographical ideas regarding the location of the island Cerne.

In the epic poem titled "**Argonautica**", attributed to Orpheus, whose geographical background hails from very remote times, there is mentioned the island called *'**Iernis*** [4], situated in the big river **Oceanos**, at the straits of the **Riphaei** mountains, upstream from those rocks, perilous for navigation.

[4. Those who have considered the island **Iernis** as identical to **Hibernia** (Ireland), have taken into account only the simple name resemblance, but not at all the geographical location indicated by the Orphic poem]

From the form of its name and its geographical position, the island **Iernis** from Orpheus' Argonautica is one and the same with ***Kerne*** or **Cerne** of Eratosthenes, and this one is entirely identical with the famous island of Geryon, **Erythia** or **Rusava** [5].

[5. According to **Diodorus Siculus**, the island **Cerne** was near the mountain **Atlas**, close to the **Amazons**, therefore also in the northern region. And according to **Palaephat**, **Phorcys**, the father of the Gorgons, of the Hesperides and the of the dragon who guarded the gold apples near Atlas mountain, was a native of the island **Cerne**]

According to the old geographical descriptions, Erythia, exactly like Cerne, is the first island near the Columns of Hercules, situated in the mountain strait, beyond the perilous strip of rocks, which spread through the river bed from one bank to the other.

The name of the island **Cerne** derives incontestably from the nearby town. On the territory of Rusava or Old Orsova, at the place where the famous river **Cerna** pours its furious waters into the Danube, there was situated during the Roman times the town called **Tierna**, **Tsierna**, ***Dierna***, ***Zernes***, **Zernensium colonia** *(Ulpian, The Peutingerian Tabula, Ptolemeu, Stephanos Byzantinos, Procopius)* [6]

[6. It must be noted that in Greek dialects the letter T represents often Z. The town Zerne of old Thrace, of which we have no mention of having been in the southern regions, corresponds then to Tierna or ***Dierna***]

The island **Cerne** figures with **Herodotus** under the name of **Cyraunis**. It was situated near the Columns of Hercules. It was owned by the Carthaginese merchants. It was 200 stades long and narrow, full of olive trees and grape vines. It had therefore the same shape which the island Rusava presents even today [7].

[7. According to **Cornelius Nepos** (Pliny), the **Cerne** island was no longer than 2000 steps in circumference (2958.52m). And according to **Draghicescu**, the actual **length** of the island Ada-Kaleh or Rusava, is about 1800 steps and its **width** about 400 steps]

The river Cerna had a particular celebrity in antiquity, as it still has even today in Romanian legends. The strong ridge of the Carpathians, which precipitates from NE towards the Danube and separates the basin of Wallachia from that of Transylvania, had in old geographical literature the name of **Ceraunia**; without doubt called so after **Cerna**, the main river of this mountain group [8]

[8. These mountains **Ceraunia** or **Ceraunii**, which the old geographers characterise with a "**cursus brevissimus undis**" and as "**montes opaci**" *(Virgil)*, were also placed near the shores of Epir and at the northern end of the Red Sea (a confusion between the old Oceanos or Ister and its island **Erythia** and the **Erythrea Sea**). Finally, we find an allusion to the **two columns** near the Ceraunia mountains with **Eustathius**]

To these mountains **Ceraunia**, which made navigation on the upper part of Ister so difficult, refer the following verses written by Ovid at Tomis: "If I could still pass with my sails **in a straight line**, beyond the **Ceraunia** mountains, then I could be advised to avoid **the wild rocks**. But today I am a marooned man, and what use could be to me, who swim among the waves, to know the way by which I should have sailed **with my boat**" [9].

[9. In his poem "**De bello Getico**", **Claudian** mentions the **Iron Gates**, which opened to the **Getae**, the **inhospitable rocks from Cerna** (**Cyrnus**), and the **strait which boiled with foam**, or "**Cazane**" (TN – Cauldrons) as the people call them. But the location of those places, difficult for communications with the rest of Europe, becoming obscured in later times of classical antiquity, the name **Cyrnus** or **Cyrnos** *(Claudian)* was applied to Corsica]

6. The islands called *Gadeira* (Gadira) by the Columns of Hercules.

Close to the Columns of Hercules, the old geographers also mentioned two islands named ***Gadeira***, **Gadira** *(Scylax)*, both situated inside the strait *(Dionysus)*.

One of these islands was considered as the extreme terminus point of navigation on the old Oceanos, beyond which the commercial vessels could not pass *(Pindar, Pliny, Eustathius)*.

From the information which **Herodotus** had got from the Greeks of Scythia, this extreme island called **Gadira** was situated in the big river called Oceanos, beyond the Columns of Hercules, close to Erythia island; or in other words, the island Gadira was known also to the Black Sea merchants. It was therefore situated in the north-western parts of Thrace.

From the point of view of the actual geography, the old island **Gadira** corresponded to the island named today **Ogradina**, located inside the gorge of the Danube, at a distance of 9.5km upstream from Rusava island. The origin and form of the name "Ogradina" belongs to the proto-Latin lexicon, or the old Pelasgian language (TN - in Romanian language **Ograda** is a fenced place). In the vicinity of Syracusa, as **Stephanos Byzantinos** tells us, there was the island called ***Achradine***. It is a similar name with Ogradina island, near the Iron Gates.

The old geographical traditions told that further upstream from the island Gadira, navigation was not possible. There the stone walls were so close that, according to **Pliny**, one single tree could hinder with its branches the passing of the vessels [10].

[10. This geographical tradition could not be applied to the Gibraltar strait, which **Strabo** says that at its narrower point was cca 70 stades wide, that is 12.390km, or 14.700km, depending on which stade Strabo had in mind, the attic stade of 177m or the ionic one of 210m]

The famous strait of the Danube, upstream from the island Ogradina, presents even today the same picture. Here the mountains rise on both sides to 600m, like two almost vertical walls. Here the river bed is extremely narrow (113m) and the navigable channel is barely 4m wide *(Niox – Geographie militaire).* So what **Pliny** communicates us, that further up from Gadira island the branches of a single tree could block the passing of the vessels, is a geographical

truth. Later on though, when the true position of the Columns of Hercules had become obscured, the island Gadira, exactly like the island Erythia or Rusava, exactly like the Columns of Hercules, was dislocated and transferred to the south-western parts of Europe. And because inside the strait between Europe and Africa there was no similar island, the old Gadira was placed in the open waters of the External Ocean, near Hispania Baetica, at a distance of 25,000 Roman steps (cca 37km), outside the strait of Gibraltar *(Pliny, Strabo).*

The placing of Gadira in the External Ocean was only a simple fiction. It did not correspond from any point of view to the old geographical traditions.

The second island, which Greek geographers called **Gadira**, was considered as identical with **Erythia**, the island renowned for its exuberant vegetation. Erythia, writes **Apollodorus**, is an island which today is called **Gadira**, In this island Geryon, Chrysaor's son dwelt *(Priscian, Stephanos Byzantinos, Eustathius, Strabo).* But, according to the geographical poem of **Avienus**, it was not the island Erythia, but a nearby place, and a fort situated on the top of a mountain which overlooked the strait, which had the name **Gadir** [11].

[11. The first island near the Columns of Hercules (**Erythia** or **Rusava**), was called in older times **Cotinusa**, meaning **the island of the wild olive trees**, from ***chotinos***, oleander. **Pindar** also writes that **Hercules**, travelling to the **Hyperboreans**, took from the shady sources of the Ister (or from its cataracts, from where the river flew under this name), a **wild olive tree**, which he brought and planted near the temple of Jove at Olympia, to shade with its branches the altars of the gods, and to serve for crowning the men who distinguished themselves through virtuous deeds. **The oleander was therefore a holy tree for the Hyperboreans**. The general opinion is that the olive tree was introduced in Europe from Asia Minor (Mommsen), but according to the oldest traditions, the wild olive tree could be found on the northern bank of the Ister even around the beginning of human history, as the wild grape vine also is found even today in great abundance in the same area. Reminiscences about the **olive trees**, **fig trees** and **citrus** (lemon) **trees**, plants which once upon a time had stood in close association with religious institutions, echo even today in the folk poetry of all Romanians, in Transylvania, Hungary, Wallachia and Moldova. **Doctor Popovici** says the following about the climate of **Mihadia**, in the Iron Gates region: "that the climate here is more moderate, is proved by the whole type of the vegetation; here, **around these mineral baths**, **there are to be found Tauro-Caucasic plants**, as well as many from **Istria**, and some of the flowers which grow in the western parts of France and **the eastern part of the Apennines and the Pyrenees**. The air here is softer and calmer than in other parts of Banat and Wallachia….here the grape vines and the fig trees stay all winter exposed to the cold, with no damage to their crops"]

This "**locus**" and "**arx Gadir**" *(Avienus)* corresponds from the point of view of actual geography, to the southern promontory facing the island Rusava, which even today is called **Grad**, and where ruins of an old fort can still be seen [12]

[12. The custom to build **fortified places to guard the navigation routes** in the more important points, existed even in pre-historical antiquity]

The word "**grad**" with the meaning of fortification is not of Slavic origin. It belongs to the Pelasgian idiom from the Danube [13].

[13. In Romanian topical nomenclature was preserved mainly the form of "**Gradisce**", but we still find **grad** and **Gradet**]

In Latin classical literature, the archaic **gradus** had also the military meaning of "strong position, occupied by the combatants".

7. The Columns of Hercules called *Pylai Gadeirides* (Gherdapuri)

The poet **Pindar** calls the Columns of Hercules ***Pylai Gadeirides***, in other words "**The Gates Gadira**".

Since the most remote times, the famous strait through which the Danube, the giant river of the ancient world, crosses from the Hungarian basin to the Romanian basin, had a special commercial, political and military importance.

In **Homer**'s Iliad, this renowned gate of Europe is known under the name of ***sydereiai pylai***, in other words **The Iron Gates**, and they were located in the country of the **Arimi**, the place where Typhon, the legendary dragon of Theogony, was thrown in a deep cave; and in the work of the poet **Claudian** they appear under the name of **Ferratae portae** of the **Getae**.

From this point onwards, the communication on the old Oceanos potamos or Ister appears to be extremely difficult for the commercial vessels coming from southern regions.

The ancients told that near the Columns of Hercules there was a long and wide strip of snaggy rocks, some visible, others hidden under the surface of the water, and that they stretched across the bed of the old Oceanos from one bank to the other *(Scylax)*.

These rocks, so dangerous for navigation until the present day, which **Ovid** names **fera saxa** from nearby the **Ceraunia** mountains (or the mountains of Cerna), were also called in antiquity ***Katarrachtai***. **Suidas** describes them, on the base of an unknown author, as follows: "the **Cataracts** are rocks (*petrai*) in the **Ister** river, which rise like a mountain under the surface of the water. Here the Ister, precipitating itself with great speed onto these rocks, is hit back with an enormous noise, then the waves, passing over them with a deafening sound, form fast whirlpools, tides, high and low, so much so that the river in these places does not differ much from the Sicily strait". Near this frightening barrier of crags, which formed the most perilous point on the river Ister, there was on the northern bank the **Iron Gate**, called ***sidereiai pylai*** by Homer and ***Pylai Gadeirides*** by Pindar, a narrow path used by the land travellers, which once was closed for sure by an iron gate.

Which was though the origin of the name ***Pylai Gadeirides***?

As per Romanian language usage, the natural obstacles formed by rocks and bigger stones, which stretch across the bed of a river from one bank to the other, where the water in its flow, hitting them, formes a line of waves, have the name of **gard** (TN – fence).

The old geographers interpreted in the same way the name of the place **Gadir**, or ***Gadeira***, from nearby the Columns of Hercules. According to Roman authors, Gadir meant in the Punic language **sepes**, in other words **gard**, according to the Roman authors **Pliny** and **Avienus**. This name though, which appears under the name ***Gadeira*** with the Greek authors *(Eratosthenes, Stephanos Byzantinos)*, did not belong to the Phoenician idiom from Libya *(Claudius Iulius).* The ancient population of north Africa, which was in large part under Carthagena's rule, was of Pelasgian origin. **Getulii**, the most numerous inhabitants of Libya, had emigrated there, according to traditions, from the region of the European **Getae** *(Isidoris).* The word **Gadir**, judging from its form and meaning of "sepes" which the Latin texts attribute

to it, is only a distorted reproduction of the popular Pelasgian word of **gard**, **garduri** (pl). From here stems the Greek name (in plural form) of ***ta Gadeira***, from here the name ***Pylai Gadeirides***, or the Gate from near the rocky fence which cut across the bed of the old Oceanos. We find also the same interpretation of the name ***Gadeira***, but under a different form, with the old Greek authors.

Hercules, **Suidas** tells us, citing from an unknown author, threw enormous rocks at the mouth of the Ocean, to prevent the entry of beasts or monsters. So, according to legends, he had made a fence of stones across the bed of the river Oceanos. And **Apollodorus** writes that the goddess Juno, by sending a gadfly against the herds taken from Geryon, they scattered far and wide through the mountains of Thrace. Hercules though, attributing this calamity to the river **Strymon** (Ister, TN – **Istru**), filled its bed with stones and changed it from navigable into a non-navigable river.

The name ***Gadeirides Pylai*** used by the Greek merchants and navigators, had once become very popular in the region of the Iron Gates. The inhabitants on both sides of the Danube call even today the cataracts, or the stone fence near the Iron Gates, **Gherdapuri**, a simple distorted form of the old commercial name ***Gadeirides Pylai***.



The Danube cataracts, downstream from Rusava (Orsova), near the **Iron Gates**, between Gura Vaii and Verciorova. *Drawing from a photograph, published by Reclus in Nouvelle Geographie universelle*.

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